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Thursday April 18 1996

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The Guardian

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Ian Katz on the lingering bitterness, one year on

Why London isn't working

OnLine

Terrible legacy of Oklahoma

My vision for the capital



Finding a home in the cyber city

G2 with European

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Labour targets company cars

Tax hike revealed in leaked plans

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

DRAGMATIC reform of company car use and a clampdown on company car tax evasion are at the heart of a Labour Party

statement on transport policy expected to be released next month. The measures could damage car production. The document, a copy of which has been seen by the Guardian, is the first indication of the likely attitude of a Blair government towards transport. It says the tax system for company cars causes

urban congestion and promises tax concessions for firms which adopt company travel plans reducing car travel. Labour says it wants to stabilise national traffic levels by 2010 and reduce them to 1990 levels by 2020. To this end it will produce a 20-year strategy with a five-year rolling programme for transport investment and taxation. It will establish a national transport forum, drawn from business and transport users and operators, who will advise government on strategy and produce an annual report to Parliament. The overall strategy will

require an increase in public spending, but this will have to depend on economic growth. Proposals include:

- a 30 per cent reduction in urban traffic over 10 years;
- speed limits of 50mph on some residential streets;
- More speed cameras;
- French-style picnic areas and lay-bys to replace the Government's "motorway service area free-for-all";
- a national network of truckstop facilities;
- a simplified national fares and ticket system, allowing people "significantly cheaper and more flexible travel on buses and trains";

an end to the Government's privately inspired "design, build and operate" road schemes. The national targets will be used as a framework for local authorities to set targets for cutting traffic and pollution. The document deals with the rail industry only in a general way. It was drawn up while the leadership was trying to make up its mind on rail privatisation and the flotation of Railtrack. It says Labour would combine with the private sector to invest in rail, but not whether it would re-nationalise the system. The document says Labour

can achieve many of its objectives "simply by redirecting transport spending". It says it can make savings from "bringing the railways back together, and cutting the "grave train" of consultants and lawyers". Labour will redirect "significant sums" currently earmarked for road building towards local transport strategies. It says 50 per cent of cars entering London are company cars or have free parking at work. The statement suggests that "many company cars are 'perks' given as part of salary packages rather than because of genuine need".

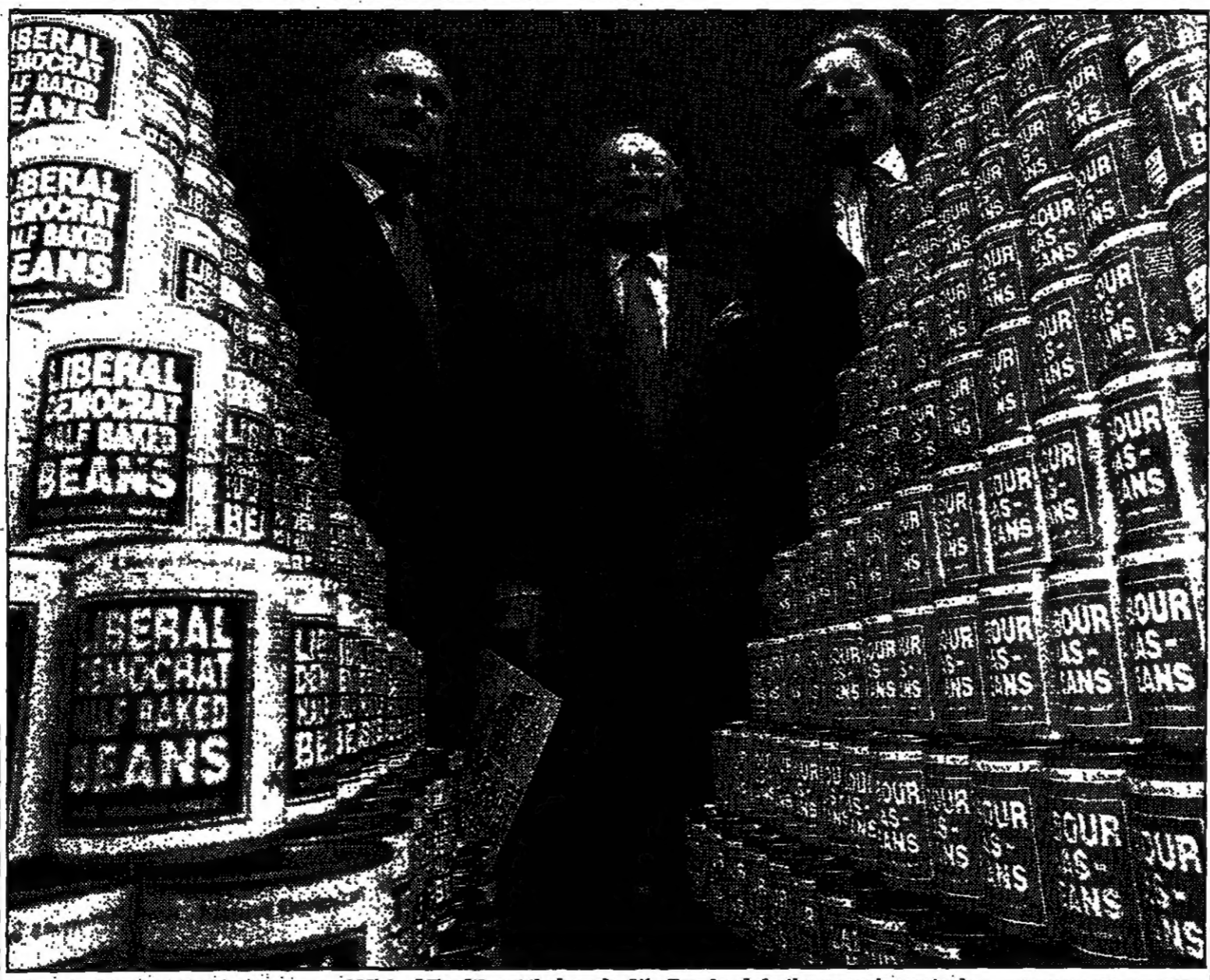
The statement proposes taxing the full value of free fuel to company car users and penalising those who could not prove that they had been using their car for business. It is likely to provoke a furious reaction from the industry. Car manufacturers have repeatedly said production would be badly affected and cause job losses. The purchase of company cars is increasing, while cars bought solely for private use is flattening out. Of the 180,275 registrations in March, 57 per cent were for fleet cars. Last year nearly 50 per cent of registrations were for fleet cars. A total of 1,945,366 cars were registered, of which 912,629 were for company use where there were more than 25 in a fleet. Labour is considering a business charge on parking spaces in commercial premises to fund public transport. These could support town centres by reducing rates on small businesses. The party wants to offer alternatives to car-based shopping by encouraging home delivery services a condition of planning permission for shop schemes. Letters, page 8



Tory chief suffers radio rage

Peterak Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

It should have been a fine day, the launch of an election campaign and a time when a party chairman comes into his own. And yet, under gentle questioning by the Today programme's Sue MacGregor, Brian Mawhinney exploded on air. Dr Mawhinney had been struggling to contain his notorious temper as Ms MacGregor began her interview. He fought to contain himself as he acknowledged "the challenge to the Tories of the local elections". Ms MacGregor reminded him that in 1990 the Tories had got rid of the troublesome poll tax and its architect, Margaret Thatcher. Might the party "have to do something equally dramatic" if it was not to lose more seats? Dr Mawhinney lifted off. "Let's stay in the real world, can we?" He was quickly in orbit. "What you have just suggested... is that we should dump the Prime Minister. Don't be ridiculous. That isn't even worthy of an answer," he thundered.



Brian Mawhinney, left, John Gummer and Michael Heseltine at the launch of the Tory local election campaign yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSAU

"You drew the parallel with Mrs Thatcher and that is a ludicrous, and indefensible question, and if you think I'm annoyed with you it is because it is that kind of sneaky question by Today programme presenters which so annoys people who listen to this programme up and down the country."

He left in a huff. Two hours later he was back at the launch of the campaign on BBC Radio. There was John Gummer, Environment Secretary. He blew up on Today a couple of weeks back, when asked about that picture of him stuffing a burger into his daughter's mouth. He seemed happy enough to be pictured with this

foodstuff. And poor old Michael Heseltine, Deputy Prime Minister. His clashes with Today presenters are usually joints — he privately admits to getting on with them. At least he had the grace to look embarrassed.

Leader comment, page 6; Hugo Young, page 9

US firm targets National Power

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

TAKESOVER frenzy in the privatised electricity industry erupted again yesterday as National Power, Britain's biggest power station operator, found its plans for expansion threatened by an audacious approach from a US company which could lead to an \$2.5 billion bid. In a move which presents Ian Lang, the Trade Secretary, with the toughest dilemma he has faced since the bidding war started in the sector last year, Southern Company of Atlanta, Georgia, officially confirmed that it had approached National Power to discuss a merger. Were the US group — which already owns one of the 12 regional electricity companies having taken over SWEB — to succeed, it would accelerate an assault on the British power sector by American corporations which could see them owning between a third and a half of the entire industry. The approach from Southern — widely criticised in the US for its corporate practices — comes as National Power

and its smaller rival, PowerGen, are waiting for clearance from the Monopolies Commission and Mr Lang to take control of two separate regional power companies. National Power last autumn launched a \$2.5 billion bid for Southern Electric, soon after PowerGen unveiled a similar agreed deal, this time worth \$1.9 billion, for Midlands Electricity. The takeovers were referred to the MMC on the grounds that they would bring together power generators with electricity distribution companies for the first time since privatisation in 1990, when the two sides of the industry were deliberately kept separate to avoid vertical integration. Industry watchdogs have argued strongly that the bids would harm consumers and competition. But last week leaked copies of the commission's findings suggested that the MMC was prepared to allow the deals to proceed, raising City expectations that Mr Lang would endorse the recommendations. The Southern Company, which carries a US stock market listing, returns to page 3, column 6 City notebook, page 11

A sad day for Carlo too in the fuss at court No. 1

Jobless mechanic's five minutes of fame reveals fate worse than Yorks

Gary Young

CARLO Giambrone was "gobsmacked". The unemployed mechanic arrived at court No.1 in Somerset House yesterday in a bomber jacket and jeans to tell the judge he could not afford to pay the costs awarded against him after his divorce. He left five minutes later being compared with the Duke of York and facing ques-

tion from the world's media about the future of the monarchy and where his own marriage had gone wrong. "I thought I was going to be on my own — in and out," he said. "It was a big surprise to me, all the fuss." It was in the five minutes between coming and going that he learned that the divorce of the Duke and Duchess of York was on the same list in a hearing that lasted just over three minutes, with the court judge granting decrees nisi all round. Carlo, aged 28, and the duke both have two children for whom they would like to take joint responsibility and estranged wives with whom they would like to remain "good friends". But the similarities between case 15, A E v C. Giambrone, and case 28, HRE The Duke of York v HRE The Duchess of York, end there. Giambrone, born in Britain of Italian parents, got married at Fulham register office in 1989 and had a reception at a tourist hotel in west London. When they got back they

moved into a tiny house. "I had to sleep on the sofa, and my wife had a single bed in a bedroom no bigger than an ordinary bathroom. It took us two and a half years to get out of there, and by then things were not so good." The judge told him the costs to support his two children, aged six and nine months, were a waste for the solicitors in the case. "I have my kids every weekend, I shall carry on giving my wife what support I can, though at the moment I'm only getting £74 benefit every two weeks." Meanwhile, on the other

side of the continent, the Duchess of York emerged from her Swiss chalet to announce that yesterday was the saddest day of her life. "We'll take every day as it comes — every day is a new day," she said, declaring that she and Andrew would remain "bestest of friends". In six weeks the couple will be formally divorced. Mr Giambrone said of the Yorks: "It seems amazing to be dealt with in the same way like this."



Carlo Giambrone... tiny house led to marriage failure

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STEPTRONIC GEARBOX
13% MORE RESPONSIVE

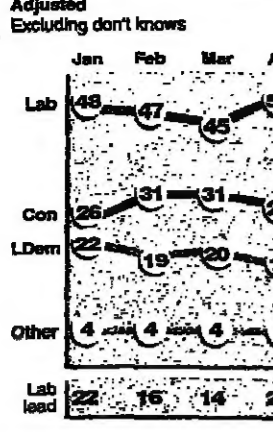
THE NEW BMW 5 SERIES



Best rating for year ends downward drift as local elections near □ Tax cut fails to lift Conservatives

Labour hits opinion poll high

Voting intention



Martin Kettle

LABOUR'S poll rating has leapt to its highest level in nearly a year, following last week's Staffordshire South-East byelection victory. The result leaves the Conservatives facing an even worse than expected showing in next month's local elections.

In the latest Guardian/ICM monthly adjusted opinion survey Labour is on 50 per cent (up 5 points compared with March), with the Conservatives 29 (down 2), Liberal Democrats 17 (down 3) and others 4 (no change). Labour's lead over the Conservatives

has increased by seven points in a month, from 14 per cent in March to 21 per cent in April.

The latest monthly poll shows a particularly sharp swing from Conservative to Labour among women voters, 7.5 per cent, compared with a 2.5 per cent swing among men.

This is the first time that Labour has scored 50 per cent or more since June last year, before John Major's re-election as Conservative leader narrowed the gap between the parties.

Labour is not back to the record ratings it achieved in spring 1995, but the new high ends a downward drift for the party in the polls since the

New Year.

The Conservatives will be disappointed that this month's tax changes have not improved the party's showing. The Liberal Democrats have recorded their worst showing this year.

Like all surveys taken immediately after a newsworthy byelection, the latest figures probably reflect a post-byelection surge for the winning party. However the swing also reflects a bad month for the Government, dominated by the beef crisis.

In the less reliable unadjusted monthly survey Labour stands on 56 per cent (up 5), Conservatives 25 (down 1), Liberal Democrats 16 (down 4), others 4 (no

change). Labour's lead in the unadjusted survey is 31 points, compared with 25 in March.

The Conservatives will take comfort from Labour's much narrower lead on economic policies. Asked which party has the best policies for dealing with the economy, voters said Labour 52, Conservatives 22, Liberal Democrats 5, others 1, with 39 per cent undecided.

Voters overwhelmingly want Mr Major to call a general election if he loses his Commons majority, now standing at one following last week's byelection.

If the Conservatives lose overall control of the Commons, nearly three-quarters

of voters want Mr Major to call an election. Fewer than one in six want him to carry on at the head of a minority regime, the course the Prime Minister is thought to favour. A mere 4 per cent favour a Tory deal with the Ulster Unionists.

Even among Conservative voters a majority favour an immediate general election if the majority is lost.

ICM interviewed a random sample of 1,200 adults aged 18 and over by telephone over April 12-18. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults.

Sketch

Useful martyr puts Tories on the rack



Simon Hoggart

DON'T fully subscribe to the depiction of Clive Short as a feminist martyr pinned on the rack by Mr Blair's male Myrmidons merely because of her remarks about tax last weekend.

Nor am I altogether happy with the blunt "speak-as-I-find" image she cultivates, a politically correct version of the Duchess of York. There's an elderly lady in our neighbourhood who rides her bike down the street speaking her mind at the top of her voice. But you can't do that in a shadow cabinet.

Yet most people are tremendously fond of Ms Short. So am I. Perhaps at times she is a little too eager to do Mr Blair's more distasteful jobs for him, actively helping to de-select candidates such as Liz Davies who do not fit the New Labour template, but few doubt her honesty.

The far left groupuscule Labour Briefing describes her, in the old Stalinist phrase, as "Blair's Useful Idiot", but that is preferable to being another of Blair's Useless Sophisticates.

Yesterday, as Opposition transport spokeswoman, she had to testify in a debate on the privatisation of Railtrack, and she did extremely well.

She rose to a huge cheer from both sides; nearly everyone likes her, the Tories in particular because they think she has revealed Labour's real tax plans, Labour back.

Beneficial because she is on bad terms with the leader's office.

(As one of the Myrmidons told this paper the other day: "She accepts that she screwed up big-time." This stuff is borrowed from the United States, where political sidekicks feel obliged to talk about each other as if they were rival Mafia consiglieri. We'll know the virus is terminal when we hear the ultimate tough-guy phrase, usually from spotty

young men who couldn't punch their way out of a crisp packet: "Blair cleaned her clock.")

She was obviously nervous and was twice quavered and trembled. But she produced a tough, reasoned argument which the Conservatives found hard to answer.

After a few moments she smiled sweetly and said: "I don't like to say a few words about tax." The Tories shuffled with pleasure, hoping she would dig a deeper pit and jump straight in it.

"The cost of privatising the railways," she said, "works out at £106.88 per taxpayer equivalent to one penny on the basic rate of tax."

There is no answer to that, and the Conservatives did not provide one. Indeed they were strangely quiet throughout her speech, so much so that it ended after only 20 minutes — wondrously brief in these days of logorrhoeic frontbenchers.

She made good use of the leaked letter from the British Rail chairman, pointing out the prospectus is wildly optimistic, and she had amusing sport with the ludicrously small amount provided for Railtrack to pay penalties to the various spivs, foreigners and rail-rat who are taking over the train companies.

A clumsy metaphor ("this is like a vandal who is going to destroy a monument asking the caretaker what he will do to restore the monument after he has destroyed it") didn't do her much harm, and she even gave some indication of what her party would do in government — a rare sighting of a Labour policy. Apparently they are going to get the rail regulator to grab hold of Railtrack's generative organs, and squeeze them as hard as they can.

Sir George Young, a good man fallen among Tory ministers, had prepared a speech about taxes. "Harriet Harman was endorsed for acting like a Tory," Ms Short rebuked for speaking like a socialist, but she had already defused the issue with skill, and the Speaker told Sir George to get back to the subject. Dawn Primarolo sat next to Labour's new heroine, and the two girls shared a warm little hand-cuddle.

Sweet success for UK's oily chocs

Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE issue had engaged some of the finest minds in Europe for 34 years — whether British chocolate should in fact be called vegetable.

Opponents argued that only pure chocolate, that is chocolate made only with cocoa butter, was worthy of the name. Britain's finest, such as Mars and KitKat, contained 5 per cent vegetable fat.

A compromise in Strasbourg last night gave Britain's confectionary back its good name. Labelling will be changed so that consumers can see without reading the small print that they are buying a product made with vegetable oil.

The issue has divided Europe, with the fine chocolate specialists of France, Germany and Belgium claiming that the version used almost universally in British chocolate bars is not fit to have the name.

The British retaliated by saying the vegetable oil makes the chocolate harder, of more regular quality, less prone to fatty white spots — and less likely to melt in your hand.

John Newman, director of the Biscuit, Cake, Chocolate and Confectionery Alliance in London, said: "We



Chocolate not vegetable... the British product contains vegetable fat, but the compromise means it can continue to bear the name. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

have been defending this since 1973 when we joined the Common Market and gained an exemption for our chocolate.

"British chocolate has always been made with vegetable oil and it does not taste any different because the taste is provided by the 95 per cent which is made from cocoa butter."

What worried the cocoa bean supporters was the prospect of British choco-

late spreading, originally only Britain, Ireland and Denmark were allowed to use vegetable oil because they had traditionally done so before joining the Common Market. Now newer members — Portugal, Austria, Sweden and Finland — are claiming the right to adulterate their chocolate. The Finns allow 10 per cent in their bars — though they will have to reduce that now.

Under single market rules, now that chocolate containing vegetable oil is allowed the name, other member states will not be able to exclude it.

Supporters of the cocoa bean produced one last trump card: lobbyists acting on behalf of Third World producers such as Brazil, Cameroon, Ecuador, Ghana, the Ivory Coast and Venezuela claimed they would be put out of busi-

ness unless Britain were forced to toe the line.

A spokesman for the Cocoa Producing Countries Secretariat, based in Brussels, said: "For some countries it would be absolutely disastrous if the British practice spread. It could reduce demand by 200,000 tonnes a year."

"We are prepared to compromise in the labelling providing it's large enough, so that people know it is

made with vegetable oil and don't buy it."

The alliance struck back by claiming that its vegetable oil, made from shea nuts, was vital to the economies of even poorer Third World countries, such as Mali and Burkina Faso.

The European Commission's compromise was that all vegetable oils used will have to come from developing countries — and the labelling must be clearer.

First night

Long on detail, short on focus

Andrew Clements

LSO/Tilson Thomas

ROBIN Holloway's Third Concerto For Orchestra — commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra and given its superbly confident premiere in the Barbican last night under Michael Tilson Thomas — has been a long time in the making. Its origins date back 19 years and it has been much anticipated, not least because the Second Concerto for Orchestra had been the work that at last seemed to pull together all the disparate threads in Holloway's development and weave them into a coherent and distinctive musical language.

A delight in the sensuous complexity of orchestral sound, always one of Holloway's strongest suits, had suddenly been combined with a rigorous approach to the problem of a building a large-scale form. The "Holloway problem", that of a composer who sometimes seemed to adopt a new musical persona with every major work he wrote, seemed to have been solved at last. So a Third Concerto promised a new synthesis, another chance to reassess.

Certainly the language of the new piece is coherent and personal. For all its nods towards influences — Tippett and Sibelius, Stravinsky and Ravel, Bruckner and Wagner — it never seems like pastiche, while the aural imagination, the treatment of the orchestra is virtuosic.

Like the Second Concerto it began with an impression of

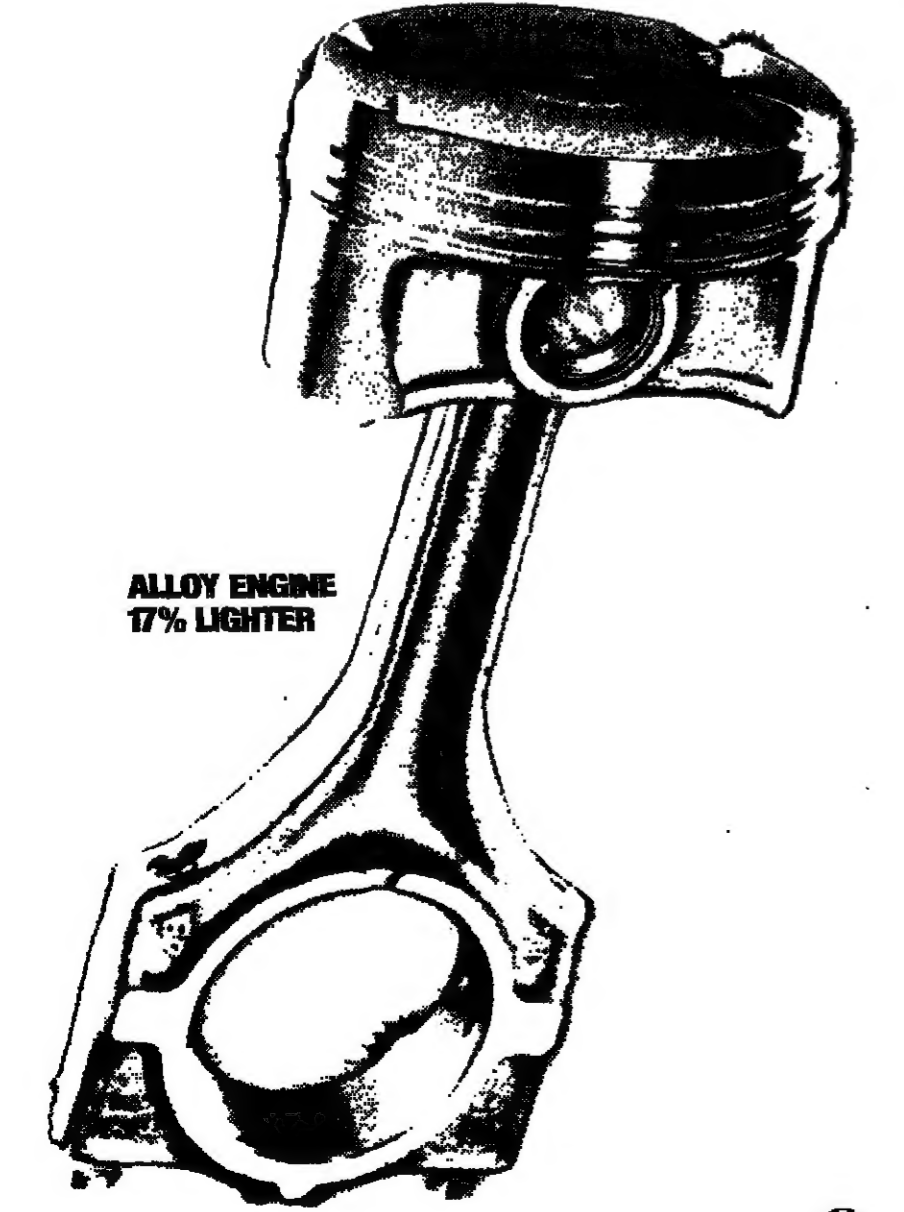
place, evoking images of South America.

In his programme note Holloway defines the four-section work as "athematic, concerned only with organising its shifting textures into different kinds of momentum, journey, arrival". It is a strange claim, for the whole structure seems to be full of thematic working, of blocks of material presented, then developed and elaborated.

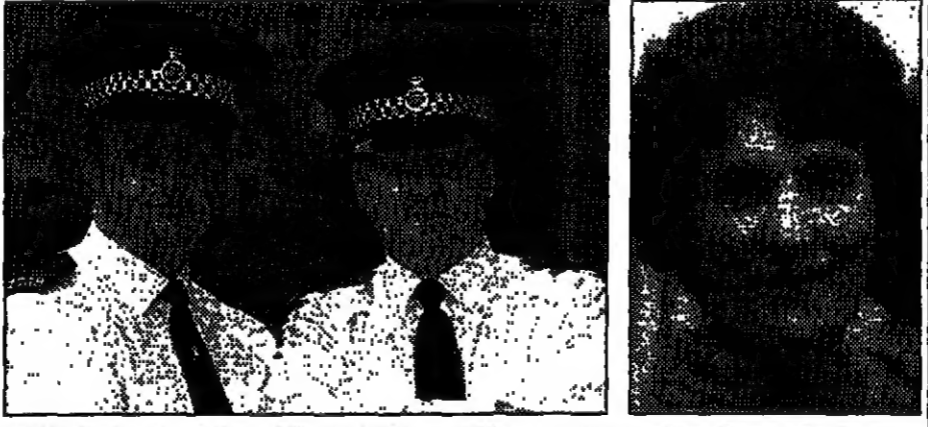
Everything in the work stems from the cluster of ideas that well up in the opening moments. The rest of the opening section starts to nurture and expand upon them in a series of waves. The second section is a chaconne, a development across 42 variations of a row of musical "objects" stretching out what had been compacted in the opening section, and landing upon a gigantic climax. The third section, gradually picking up speed, and then slipping back into uncertainty seems the nearest thing to programme music in the work, while the finale is a giant dance, relentless and cumulative, pulling together elements from earlier sections and piling them into a final devastating chord.

The scheme is ambitious; the concerto lasts 45 minutes. But too often the welter of detail, the proliferating lines, the skeins of melody carry so much information that separating what is important from passing decoration is almost impossible. Fewer notes and more sharply focused ideas might have made it more purposeful and effective, and a more worthy follow-up to its superb predecessor.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.



THE NEW BMW 5 SERIES



Philip Shrimpton, left, and Kevin Smith, and Maureen Jones, whom they revived

'Dead' woman revived

Policemen shocked as diabetic stirs after collapsing into coma

Martin Walkwright

TWO police officers were commended yesterday for reviving a woman who had been declared dead, after seeing her leg twitch as they checked the bedroom where she had collapsed in a diabetic coma.

The rural beat constables in Yorkshire were called in as a formality after Maureen Jones, aged 58, a mother of four, had been certified dead by her family doctor in Thwing, near Great Driffield.

North Yorkshire health authority has launched an inquiry into the incident, which echoed the last-minute rescue of the Cambridgeshire pensioner, Daphne Banks, whose feeble signs of life were spotted by an undertaker in a mortuary.

Last night, Mrs Jones's family were getting over the shock of being told she was dead. Her son Neil, aged 39, who found his mother slumped on the floor of her

home and called the doctor, said: "I still haven't got my head round it."

Constables Kevin Smith and Philip Shrimpton, who resuscitated Mrs Jones, said they had been so shaken by the episode that neither had wanted to drive their patrol car back to the police station.

They arrived at Mrs Jones's home in Thwing, less than half an hour after the family's GP, Marion Meeson, had declared her dead.

"The body was lying face down and white, and it had obviously been there for some time," said PC Smith, who has been in the force for five years. "Then the leg moved — it just jumped in the air. I was scared stiff, never mind all this macho police stuff."

Superintendent Peter Wilshaw, divisional commander of Humberside police, said PC Smith, aged 31, and PC Shrimpton, aged 36, were "good solid coppers who had done a first class job". PC Shrimpton had stopped comforting Mrs Jones's family to

help his colleague give heart massage and clear her airways. When paramedics arrived, her eyes were open and showing signs of recognition though she was not coherent.

PC Shrimpton said: "After the event we just sat in the car... so shaken that we were arguing about who was going to drive because neither of us wanted to."

Mr Jones's other son, Nigel, aged 34, said he had been told his mother had collapsed and had rushed from his army base in Suffolk expecting to find her dead, only to hear she was alive in hospital.

He said: "She is recovering well. Her sugar level was right down." All his mother could remember was going to bed on Sunday night then waking up in the hospital.

The family involved in the earlier incident in Cambridgeshire decided not to make a complaint after their GP, David Roberts, apologised. Mrs Banks, an epileptic who took an overdose of drugs, was seen moving as she lay in a bodybag at Hinchingsbrooke hospital, where she was about to be placed in a storage compartment pending an inquest.

Blair told schools need £3bn if Labour wins power

John Carvel

LABOUR leader Tony Blair was told last night that a Labour government would have to increase education spending by at least £3 billion a year immediately on taking office if it wanted to combat "disgraceful" levels of illiteracy and the crisis of underachievement in schools.

Sir Claus Moser, former senior civil servant, said Labour should give "unquestioned priority" in its first two years to assisting nursery and primary education and improving the status of teachers.

David Blunkett, shadow education secretary, welcomed Sir Claus's criticism of the Government but sidestepped the demand for an immediate cash injection.

Masked men shoot PC in his home

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She is too woman but it is from her I never li

صحنه من الاجل

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Police promise to meet force with force in outbreak of street violence



Caroline Kennedy leaving her home in a police car yesterday after the shooting of her partner, PC Stephen Hardy, on Tuesday night

Masked men shoot PC in his home

Peter Hetherington and Stephen Lyle

POLICE in Merseyside yesterday promised to fight armed criminals in Liverpool with force after a constable was gunned down in his home by two masked men — the fifth shooting in the city since Saturday. Chief Constable Jim Sharples warned that weapons were increasingly becoming a "fashion accessory" for criminals in the area, who settled disputes with a gun. Mystery last night surrounded the attack on PC Stephen Hardy, aged 26, whose condition in hospital was described as "serious but stable" after surgery. Armed men burst into the house the constable shares with his girlfriend, Caroline Kennedy, at 11pm on Tuesday and ordered them to lie on the floor. The 29-year-old policeman, who had tried to dial 999, was shot at close range in both legs and his right arm while the couple's one-year-old son lay in a bedroom. "The shooting could mark a

Liverpool shootings



Since Saturday, six men have been shot in and around Liverpool. 1 Saturday Three men shot in the city since Saturday. 2 Sunday PC Stephen Hardy shot in his home. 3 Sunday A pregnant woman escaped injury after her house shot at. 4 Tuesday 12.15pm: Peel Road, Bootle, man shot in leg. 5 Tuesday 1.20pm: Gildow Road South, Liverpool, man shot in leg. PC Stephen Hardy dragged from bed and shot in arm and leg. Stowbridge Close, Croxteth Park.



Stephen Hardy: Shot in both legs and right arm



David Ungi: Series of shootings followed murder

think they can walk into the homes of people, masked and armed with weapons. He warned that armed officers would "respond with force" if confronted by criminals. While acknowledging that violence on the streets was continuing after Mr Ungi's assassination, and a string of apparent hit-for-hit shootings which followed, he said police were achieving successes, with large-scale weapons seizures and a considerable number of people arrested for firearms offences over the past 18 months. The current violence began last Saturday when three men, one in his early 20s the others in their early 30s, were shot in the legs at a pub in the Old Swan area of the city. The following day a gunman fired shots at a house in Wavertree. At 12.15am on Tuesday, police say four or five men burst into a house in Bootle and shot a man in his 20s in the legs. An hour later three men burst into a house in the Old Swan area and shot a man in the legs. Both men were seriously injured. Paul Stephenson, Director of Operations for Merseyside Police, described the shootings as "reckless and callous acts of barbarism". After David Ungi's murder police began high-profile armed patrols, with Mr Sharples promising to meet force with force. In a statement yesterday, Southern made it clear that it wanted to "combine" its business with National Power, which controls 25 per cent of the British generation market. But it stressed that an approach would depend on the Government's final decision on National Power and PowerGen's own bid moves. National Power, whose shares shot up 56.5p to 578p on expectation of the bid and a bonanza for investors, instructed its shareholders to take no action. City analysts estimated that the US company would be forced to pay up to 750p a share to take control of a company which would value a bid at at least 22.5 billion. In the City the immediate consensus was that a foreign bid for one of the generators would force Mr Lang to exercise his golden share in the company, which forbids any predator building a stake of more than 15 per cent. But some observers suggested that Mr Lang would be hard-pressed to draw a line where he to give the green light to National Power and PowerGen's own expansion plans. Labour last night warned of the "ad hoc restructuring" of the electricity industry and called for new safeguards for consumers. The Consumers' Association warned that the power industry could soon be reduced to three or four super-utilities. "Competition in the market place would then be diluted rather than increased," a spokesman said.

Threat to Tory MPs' hopes of pre-election bonanza

IMF warns Clarke against tax cuts

Larry Elliott, and Sarah Ryle in Washington

THE International Monetary Fund last night told the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, that a tax-cutting bonanza in this year's budget was out of the question and joined the Governor of the Bank of England in predicting that interest rates may have reached a trough. Threatening hopes among Conservative backbenchers of cheaper borrowing and vote-winning tax cuts in the run-up to the General Election, the IMF said the delay in repairing Britain's public finances ruled out a budget giveaway while interest-rate cuts risked higher inflation. Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, used fresh signs yesterday that the economy may be strengthening to issue his own warning to Mr Clarke about the risks of higher inflation in the pipeline. Mr George said in a speech in Nottinghamshire that he would be "watching very carefully" to ensure that the Government's 2.5 per cent inflation target was not jeopardised — and scoffed at commentators who have been proclaiming the death of inflation. "I fear such reports are as premature as those of Mark Twain," Mr George said. "Inflation certainly won't stay dead of its own accord." Government figures released yesterday showed that seasonally-adjusted unemployment fell by almost

26,000 to 2,186,000 last month, while annual growth in earnings nudged up in February to 3.25 per cent — the first increase in eight months. With the Bank of England concerned that lower interest rates, tax cuts and windfall gains from building society mergers could stoke up consumer spending, Mr George underlined the point he had made in his monthly monetary meeting with the Chancellor in early March. The two men agreed to cut rates to 6 per cent, but the release of the minutes yesterday reveal that Mr George had said there was "a possibility that rates would have to be raised again at some point further ahead". Mr Clarke stressed he stood ready to put interest rates up later this year if necessary, but added that he would also cut borrowing costs if the economy remained weak. The IMF's World Economic Outlook, which was published in Washington yesterday, said that Britain had benefited from falling out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism in September 1992 — recording stronger growth than those countries closely

linked to the German mark — but predicted sluggish growth this year of 2.3 per cent, followed by 2.7 per cent in 1997. This would be in line with or ahead of the Group of Seven average, which the IMF forecast at 1.9 per cent and 2.6 per cent respectively. The IMF's chief economist, Michael Mussa, said that Britain's exports had performed better than would otherwise have been anticipated partly as a result of a depreciation in the pound that had not been cancelled out by an anticipated rise in inflation. But while the IMF acknowledged that the recent easing of monetary policy in Britain was the "appropriate" reaction to the slowdown in growth in 1995, it warned that there was no room for further relaxation via a cut in base rates. Graham Hache, an IMF economist, said: "We take the view that the current rate is about right now, but that further easing would not be a good option. That is not to say that rates should be raised right now." The IMF's general warning about cutting budget deficits was extended to Britain. Officials said that Britain was doing better than many other western European countries in terms of keeping a grip on its public finances, but warned that there was no scope for the sort of cuts that the Chancellor would want to make before the election. Leader comment, page 2; Notebook, page 1; IMF calls for cuts, page 12

Power merger mooted

continued from page 1

ket valuation of \$16 billion (£10.5 billion), was forced to go public on its approach to National Power after attempts to line up \$12 billion of financing for the deal leaked to the market late on Monday. Executives from the two companies held hasty talks the same night. In a statement yesterday, Southern made it clear that it wanted to "combine" its business with National Power, which controls 25 per cent of the British generation market. But it stressed that an approach would depend on the Government's final decision on National Power and PowerGen's own bid moves. National Power, whose shares shot up 56.5p to 578p on expectation of the bid and a bonanza for investors, instructed its shareholders to take no action. City analysts estimated that the US company would be forced to pay up to 750p a share to take control of a company which would value a bid at at least 22.5 billion. In the City the immediate consensus was that a foreign bid for one of the generators would force Mr Lang to exercise his golden share in the company, which forbids any predator building a stake of more than 15 per cent. But some observers suggested that Mr Lang would be hard-pressed to draw a line where he to give the green light to National Power and PowerGen's own expansion plans. Labour last night warned of the "ad hoc restructuring" of the electricity industry and called for new safeguards for consumers. The Consumers' Association warned that the power industry could soon be reduced to three or four super-utilities. "Competition in the market place would then be diluted rather than increased," a spokesman said.

Major told Israel must stop war

Lebanon's PM says Hizbullah 'disarmed when occupiers leave'

Ian Black in London and Derek Brown in Beirut

LEBANON is demanding an end to Israel's occupation of the country's south and will only move to disarm Hizbullah guerrillas when Israeli forces leave, the prime minister, Rafik al-Hariri, said yesterday. As Israeli air and artillery attacks — and Hizbullah rocket salvos — continued for the seventh consecutive day, Mr Hariri said after talks with the Prime Minister, John Major, in Downing Street that he preferred a French proposal for a ceasefire to one put forward by the United States — but hoped that both could be combined. Hizbullah rejected the US peace proposal as "suicide". The French plan calls for

commitments by Israel, Lebanon and Hizbullah not to attack civilian populations. The US plan does not include a reference to United Nations resolution 426, passed in 1978 to demand Israeli withdrawal from the south where it controls a border "security zone", while insisting it has no long-term territorial ambitions. Mr Hariri was in London trying to mobilise international support after initial reluctance by Britain and European countries to condemn Israeli raids because of their backing for the Middle East peace process. He acknowledged that he had differences with Hizbullah — a radical Shi'ite Muslim organisation — but refused to be drawn on the role of Iran and Syria in encouraging the guerrilla attacks.

"Hizbullah should be disarmed but doing this now will make it look as if we are facilitating occupation by Israel," Mr Hariri said. "Israel is asking us to be a traitor. We will never do it." Speaking at a press conference — from which two Israeli journalists were ejected — Lebanon's prime minister insisted that the offensive had not halted attacks on northern Israel, where Katyusha rockets have wounded 48 people. United Nations peacekeeping troops in the area said Israeli jets launched about 55 raids on south Lebanon about 55 raids and gunners pounded them with 600 shells by nightfall. Three people were killed in the bombardment and nine were wounded, including four guerrillas, bringing to 34 dead and 182 wounded the casualties since the start of the Israeli campaign. "Operation Grapes of Wrath", Israel's prime minister,

Shimon Peres, said he was holding out for a written document, as opposed to verbal understandings that ended similar Israeli strikes against the guerrillas in July 1993. "We don't want to raise expectations," Mr Peres said during a tour of northern Israel. "We cannot expect from this campaign a solution to all the problems." Despite the offensive, Mr Peres is to meet Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), in Gaza today. In Paris, President Jacques Chirac told a cabinet meeting he had telephoned the president of the European Commission, Jacques Santer, to request urgent European Union aid for Lebanese civilians. Salvos of Katyusha rockets yesterday landed in western Galilee and in the Galilee panhandle, close to the Lebanon border, but Israel's onslaught was restricted by exceptional low cloud.



She is too nice ever to say that the only way for a woman to have an active political life is to stay single, but it is glaringly obvious that she herself has benefited from her own wise decision. She was the role model I never lived up to and so naturally I hated her. Maureen Freely G2 page 4

artyr puts the rack

in detail in focus

schools need about wins power

Publisher drops book by 'proud racist'

Gary Younge

A BOOK which claims black people are less intelligent than whites was withdrawn from publication yesterday by its publisher, which branded the views of the author as repellent.

The book — *The g Factor, General Intelligence and its Implications* — by Christopher Brand, a psychology lecturer at Edinburgh university, was to be published today by John Wiley & Sons.

Promising what seemed to be a carbon copy of the furor which greeted Charles Murray's and Richard Herrnstein's book *The Bell Curve*, two years ago, the publisher last week hailed the book as a "well argued, critical review" by a man "well known for his contributions to research and debate on intelligence and personality".

But yesterday the company said: "The management does not want to support these views by disseminating them or be associated with a book that makes assertions that we find repellent."

It said the decision had been prompted by remarks Mr Brand had made in the press in which he had claimed that single mothers should be encouraged to mate with higher IQ males in order to widen the gene pool of their offspring with some intelligent forebears. "They should be encouraged to have sex with higher IQ boys. We could

teach these girls that it would be highly advantageous," he said at the weekend.

"I am perfectly proud to be a racist in the scientific sense. It is scientific fact that black Americans are less intelligent than white Americans."

Mr Brand yesterday stood by his views and said he was contemplating suing the publishers. "They're cowards and they're stupid. They have sat on this book for about a year. This is just another sign of the PC [political correctness] infection. I am taking legal advice and considering suing them for breach of contract."

Asked whether he thought black people did have lower IQs, Mr Brand laughed. "I don't believe you are seriously asking me that," he said. "You won't find any psychologist of any repute who has said anything different since the turn of the century."

Wiley & Sons admitted Mr Brand had signed the contract "about a year ago". "We publish about 1,200 books a year and it is not the policy of senior management to closely scrutinise them," a spokeswoman said.

Yet last week the company issued a press release praising the book and inviting journalists to interview Mr Brand in London.

"The *g Factor* gives a concise, accessible and critical review of the scientific evidence and addresses the fundamental questions about intelligence in a challenging, but well argued, manner which will both inform and provoke discussion," it said.

Some psychologists have criticised the publisher's decision. "This represents one of my worst fears. An attempt to stifle all intellectual freedom," said Walter Furneaux, professor of psychology at Brunel university. He said there was nothing new in Mr Brand's theories.

But others, like Michael Howe, professor of psychology at Exeter university, believe Mr Brand's views are not only dangerous but wrong. He said: "It is true that certain groups score less well in IQ testing than others, but a score doesn't assess the fundamental quality of a person — indeed, the nature of the tests themselves says a lot about expectations."



Barnaby Reynolds at Lancing, West Sussex, preparing his 'sidewalk cinema' of mannequins for exhibition in Germany, London and New York

PHOTOGRAPH: ROGER BAMBER

Brussels insists beef ban stays until UK has plan to end BSE

British legal challenge 'will take months' as confusion continues

John Palmer in Strasbourg and Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE European Commission last night refused to lift the world-wide ban on the sale of British beef until the Government provides details of a comprehensive plan for eradicating BSE.

Speaking to journalists in Strasbourg yesterday, the Farm Commissioner, Franz Fischler, said: "The ball is still in the British court."

Mr Fischler later told members of the European Parlia-

ment that he expected the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, to present him in Brussels next week with a strategy, including proposals for culling. These proposals will then be considered by veterinary experts from all 15 EU member states before being discussed by agricultural ministers in Luxembourg on April 30.

The Government's decision to challenge the commission's beef ban in the European Court of Justice is unlikely to bring swift action. European Court officials in Luxembourg last night predicted

that it could take up to 10 months to secure even a "fast track" ruling.

In Brussels, there was confusion about the legal basis on which the commission had imposed the ban. Officials were unable to cite any provisions in the Treaty of Rome.

Spokesmen attempted to claim that Mr Sauter had been misquoted when he said he would be prepared to eat British beef. Such statements by him and Mr Fischler undermine the European case that the ban was because the beef is a danger to health.

Asked in an interview with an Austrian journalist whether he would eat beef in London, Mr Sauter replied: "I would not worry about it. If Mr Fischler as the expert responsible follows this line, I would want to contribute in order to restore confidence."

European lawyers hold there is no legal basis for the ban. The commission argues it was necessary to prevent meat being reimported into the EU from third countries.

A commission spokesman said: "The main concern was to protect consumers' interests and public health."

● A urine test which could show whether cattle are incubating BSE is to be considered by the Ministry of Agriculture years after it was developed, writes Paul Brown.

John Bourne, Director of the Institute of Animal Health, told MPs on the agriculture select committee that he still doubted whether the test would work, but he was prepared to check it. Dr Harsh Narang, who developed the test, would be involved.

Dr Stephen Dealler, from Burnley General Hospital, clashed with the Chief Veterinary Officer, Keith Meldrum, when he said he believed the disease was now being passed from cows to calves. Mr Meldrum insisted that only cows fed infected feed had caught BSE. Dr Dealler's work was endorsed by Professor John Pattison, chairman of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee.

Lab help sought in US bomb case

Lawyers in Oklahoma City

LAWYERS for Timothy McVeigh, prime suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing, have sought the help of a Scottish forensic laboratory to prove that the Gulf war veteran did not plant the truck bomb which killed 168 people a year ago tomorrow.

Stephen Jones, the Oklahoma attorney representing McVeigh, says the judge hearing the bombing case has agreed to provide public funding to hire the Lothian and Borders police forensic laboratory to examine debris from the blast and reports by US forensic scientists.

He said he approached the laboratory because it had worked on the Lockerbie disaster, and one of its scientists had extensive experience with bombings in Northern Ireland. He claimed that the FBI laboratory was too closely linked to the agents who investigated the bombing. "I wanted a real honest-

to-God police laboratory, not a whore," he said.

Mr Jones has also enlisted the help of Thomas Marshall, who served for three decades as Northern Ireland's state pathologist and is regarded as Britain's leading expert on bombing deaths. Prof Marshall confirmed he had agreed to review material relating to the bodies found in the Murrah Building "just to see if everything holds water."

The seven forensic laboratories in England have been taken over by the Forensic Science Service, a "next-step" agency set up under the Government's "marketisation" policy. It has been contracted to investigate a number of high profile foreign cases.

The policy of the Lothian and Borders laboratory on accepting outside work is unclear. A police spokeswoman said no decision had been taken on whether the laboratory would get involved in the McVeigh case.

One year on, G2

Out-of-place gas giant sparks planet rethink

Tim Radford on an enigma thrown up by a discovery 40 light years away

THE first planet discovered around another star — 51 Pegasi — could force astronomers to rethink the history of the solar system. The planet is too big, too hot and not where it ought to be.

It was detected — nobody has actually seen it — last October from a "wobble" in the movement of its parent star, 40 light years away in the constellation Pegasus. Astronomers knew it had to be massive, and they decided that it would also be rocky. It is at least half the mass of Jupiter, and orbits its Sun-like parent at a distance of about 7 million kilometres. Its surface would be 1300 Celsius.

But the new planet should not be so close to its companion star, according to a team of US astronomers writing in *Nature* today. The standard theory is that stars and planets condense from a spinning, disc-shaped cloud of dust and gas. The star at the centre captures so much hydrogen that it bursts into thermonuclear flames. The planets nearest the star have most of their ice and gas blown away by the heat, leaving small rocky clinders like Mercury and Earth in the nearest orbits, and then farther out frozen "gas giants" like Jupiter and Uranus.

Dong Lin of the University of California and his colleagues report today that they think that the mysterious massive planet began much further out and was somehow dragged in.

The discovery that a "gas giant" seems to be able to



Discovery of gene could detect risk of asthma

Chris Millar Medical Correspondent

THE recent finding of a gene which contributes to asthma could lead to a screening programme to detect babies more at risk of the illness, doctors say today.

If such infants could be identified it might be possible to limit their exposure to agents in the environment which trigger asthma, such as house dust mites, and thereby protect them from developing the condition.

John Morrison and colleagues, from St James's hospital, Leeds, have been looking at a gene which produces a defence chemical called tumour necrosis factor (TNF). They studied 600 people and found that those with asthma had a variation of this gene which produces an overabundance of TNF. It is the over-production of defence system chemicals that is one of the basic causes of asthma, because the body overreacts to environmental stimuli.

Dr Morrison, a chest physician researching into asthma, said: "We have preliminary evidence that this particular molecule may be a part of the puzzle. It may be part of what predisposes people to asthma."

"There is a variation in the control part of the gene, so that if there is a stimulus they get more TNF. In effect they are getting an overdose." This is not the gene which causes asthma, but it may be part of the predisposition.

The Leeds team hopes to build on work by Stephen Hoigate and colleagues at Southampton university, who found that exposure to allergens in the first two years of life was critical in whether people developed asthma.

"We think there is a window of susceptibility in the early years of life. If we could identify those people most at risk and protect them from the allergen, we might be able to nip it in the bud."

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LONDON

صحنه من الاعمال

Divorce settlement will barely cover lavish 'royal' lifestyle. Vivek Chaudhary reports



Downhill all the way at Megeve in the French Alps



On the piste again, this time in fashionable Klosters



Wrapped up against the cold during a trip to Meribel

Can duchess get by on a mere £500,000?

THE Duchess of York may be coping with the twists and turns on the slopes of Verbier, where she is on a skiing holiday, but faces far greater hurdles once her divorce is complete. Observers believe that the £2 million settlement, £500,000 of which has been set aside for the duchess, will be sufficient to keep her in the lavish lifestyle she has become accustomed to.

Trips here and there

- August 1994. The Duchess borrowed around £100,000 to take her entourage to the Côte d'Azur for six weeks. Writs were issued against her for the return of the money.
January 1996. Trip to Washington, where she hired a £1,400-a-night suite. Then three nights in New York at another five-star hotel for £4,200. Entire cost estimated at £20,000.
March 1996. Trip to Qatar for a 26-mile horse race with a £50,000 first prize. Came 28th out of 42.
March 1996. Trip to Miami to visit tennis player Thomas Muster.
March 1996. Trip to Paradise Island, Bahamas, for around £500 a night.
Currently on "modest" skiing holiday in Verbier.

There is not some money coming in which we do not know about, then her business life must show a marked improvement. If not, she must live more modestly - or risk bankruptcy. The key to her financial future could rest with Budgie. In January, she flew to America to sign a multi-million pound deal for rights to the cartoon character. The deal includes worldwide television, video and book rights, but recent reports have suggested that it is worth much less than estimated.



Decree nisi day... The Duchess of York with her daughters, Eugenie (left) and Beatrice, on holiday in Verbier, Switzerland, yesterday

News in brief

Crucial NHS project 'faces collapse'

A COMPUTER scheme seen as crucial to development of the NHS is "in danger of collapse", according to internal correspondence in which Wales threatens to leave the nationwide project. The scheme, intended to devise a system of codes for clinical terms to be used by all doctors, has cost an estimated £6.4 million and drawn on the time and skills of 2,000 doctors.

Pilot questioned over drugs

A PILOT has been arrested for suspected drug smuggling after he staged an emergency landing in a field and saw his passenger jump out in front of a propeller. A box containing 20 kilos of herbal cannabis with an estimated street value of £20,000 was found near where the light aircraft landed in Basingstoke, Hampshire, on Tuesday.

No confidence vote at FT

JOURNALISTS at the Financial Times passed a vote of no confidence last night in the newspaper's editor, Richard Lambert, and deputy editor, Andrew Gowers, after 30 jobs were axed. Members of the National Union of Journalists will meet again today to organise a ballot on industrial action.

Hope for part-time workers

THE prospect of equal pay and employment rights for part-time workers across the European Union opened up yesterday when EU commissioners gave employers and unions the go-ahead to negotiate a legally-binding "framework agreement".

Compensation plea on killing

THE Ministry of Defence last night said it would view "sympathetically" calls for compensation from the parents of Louise Jensen, aged 23, killed by three British soldiers in Cyprus. But it refused to accept their claim that the army was partially responsible for the behaviour of the soldiers, who sexually assaulted the Danish tour guide and bludgeoned her to death.

Police face disciplinary action

FIVE Nottinghamshire police officers are to face disciplinary charges for losing five Smith and Wesson revolvers last August, when the guns, in a holdall, fell out of a police van. Four men were sentenced yesterday at Nottingham crown court for firearms and dishonesty charges after they found the guns and planned to sell them.

Open verdict on schoolboy

A PUBLIC schoolboy with a glittering academic future took an overdose because he could not bear the thought of leaving his college, his stepfather said yesterday. Richard Metcalf, aged 18, who had won a place to study classics at Oxford university, was found dead in Winchester College library on January 29.

Builder found dead

A BUILDER may have lain in agony for up to 10 days before he died after falling off through a roof he was knocking down. The body of father-of-four Jimmy Doyle, from Portsmouth, Hampshire, was found inside a house he was demolishing when the owner of the building was alerted by his dog.

Pescado inquests decision

INQUESTS into the deaths of the six crew who died when the trawler Pescado sank 13 miles off south Cornwall five years ago will not be reopened, David Bruce, the East Cornwall coroner, has decided. A spokesman for the coroner's office said the matter had been thoroughly aired at the recent manslaughter trial at Bristol crown court.

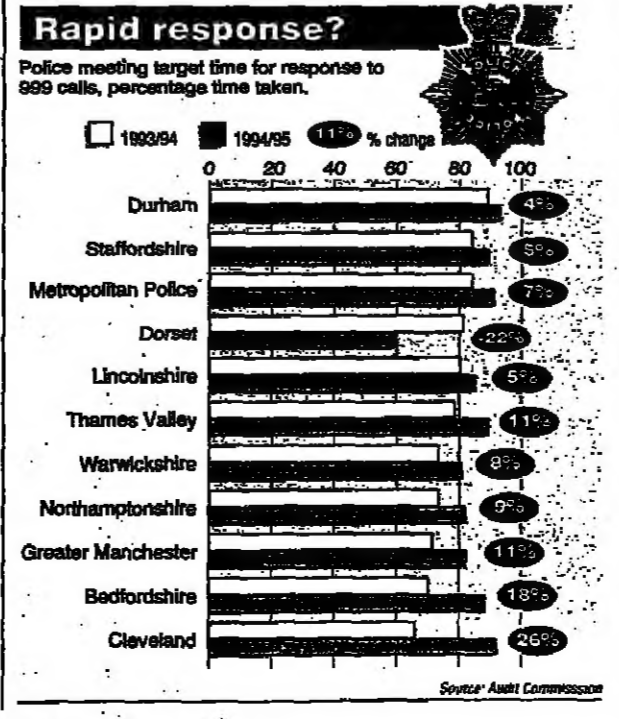
Verdict on 'homes for votes'

THE final verdict on the Westminster council "homes for votes" gerrymandering inquiry is to be published on May 9, John Magill, the district auditor, announced yesterday. The findings, expected to confirm a £30 million surcharge against former Tory leader Dame Shirley Porter and eight other councillors and officials, has been delayed until after May's local elections.

Advertisement for Direct Line mortgages. Text: "A cheaper mortgage, no legal fees and 20% off your buildings insurance when you transfer to Direct Line." Includes phone numbers for London, Manchester, and Glasgow, and a list of services.

Funds 'may not help policing'

NEW official police performance tables raise doubts over whether there is a direct link between extra funding and better policing, the Audit Commission said yesterday. Some forces last year received substantial increases in funding - up to 18 per cent in some cases - but these rises have not yet led to increases in performance.



sought mb case

Discovery gene could detect risk of asthma

Late-term condemnation may sway vital votes

Cardinals lambast Clinton on abortion

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

AMERICA'S Roman Catholic hierarchy threatened political disaster against President Clinton yesterday, signalling an election-year clash with one of the country's most powerful voting blocs.

For only the second time, all eight US cardinals joined the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in condemning a presidential decision. On this occasion Mr Clinton's refusal last week to ban a controversial late-term abortion procedure.

In a three-page letter to the president, the bishops threatened an all-out lobbying campaign against Mr Clinton's "shameful veto" of a Republican-backed ban on so-called partial-birth abortions, reviled by "pro-life" activists as virtual infanticide.

"In the coming weeks and months, each of us will do all we can to educate people about partial-birth abortions," the cardinals wrote, vowing to blame Mr Clinton for the fact that the procedure would continue now only because of his decision.

The threat could not carry more weight. The 90 million Catholics in America — nearly one in four of the pop-

ulation — are one of the key groups of floating voters in the country.

They have backed the winning presidential candidate in every election since 1976, when figures on voters' religious faith were first made available.

They account for a large slice of the so-called Reagan Democrats, the urban blue-collar constituency which kept a Republican in the White House from 1981 until 1993.

"The Catholic vote is becoming the jump ball of American politics," said Ralph Reed, director of the Christian Coalition.

"Whoever comes down with that ball usually wins in November."

Critically, Catholic votes are concentrated in the states Mr Clinton must win — ranging from Polish-Americans in Illinois to Italian-Americans in New Jersey.

Until now Mr Clinton has done well in cultivating Catholic support. His peace initiative in Northern Ireland won plaudits from Irish-Americans, the Pope and Mother Teresa, and he advocated a return to school uniforms — already policy in Catholic schools.

But he has incurred the wrath of the cardinals with

last week's veto of the bill, passed by the Republican-controlled Congress, to outlaw partial-birth abortions.

These involve delivering the foetus feet first through the birth canal before crushing its skull in a suction device.

It is used only in the rarest of circumstances, where foetal abnormalities are found too late for other methods.

Mr Clinton wanted to back a diluted version of the ban, but he was wary of alienating his feminist supporters, who regard the legislation as the first step towards banning abortion altogether. The president enjoys a huge lead among women voters and Democrats are anxious not to jeopardise it.

He made his announcement last week surrounded by women who had reluctantly undergone the procedure for the sake of their own health. His aides said he had prayed long and hard before deciding against a ban.

White House advisers are aware of the decision's potential political cost. Graphic pictures of late-term abortions could be deployed to great effect in November, and polls show that Catholics are now evenly split — 49 per cent each way — between Mr Clinton and his Republican rival, Senator Bob Dole.

White House faces investigation for 'tacit approval' of Iranian arms supply to Bosnia

AP in Washington

TWO Senate committees will investigate the secret arms shipments Iran made to Bosnian Muslims in 1994 with the tacit approval of the Clinton administration, the Senate majority leader Bob Dole said yesterday.

Mr Dole, the Republican presidential candidate, said the committees on foreign relations and intelligence would probably hold public hearings.

He said the sales took place despite an international arms embargo designed to keep weapons from reaching the warring factions in former Yugoslavia.

"We were being told all the reasons we couldn't do this at the same time the administration was looking the other way, knowing that the Iran-

ians were supplying arms," he said. "Our view is that if the arms embargo had been lifted, as we tried to do on the floor in a bipartisan way, we probably could have avoided sending troops there."

The White House, citing a need for confidentiality, has refused to give Congress an internal report on the administration's decision to allow the shipments.

"The point is not to withhold information," Mary Ellen Glynn, the White House spokeswoman, said. "The point is to protect sources."

She said White House lawyers had decided that releasing the report would violate the confidentiality rights of the president and his Intelligence Oversight Board, which produced the report.

Nevertheless, she said, Anthony Harrington, a Washington lawyer who heads the

board, had fully briefed key legislators on the contents of the report on Tuesday, leaving out the names of sources.

Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, chairman of the Senate Intelligence committee, could not be reached for comment.

The Los Angeles Times first reported on April 5 that Mr Clinton had tacitly approved the secret shipments in 1994 while publicly supporting the continuation of the United Nations embargo on such arms transfers.

Mr Clinton said a week ago that there was "absolutely nothing improper done" in deciding not to protest against the shipments to the Croatian president, Franjo Tudjman, who was allowing his country to be used as a channel for the arms flow.

Mr Dole has asked Congress to investigate.



Suffer the children... The shattered body of Tariq, an Afghan boy aged nine, lies connected to drips, watched over by his anguished mother, Shireen, in Kabul. Next week the UN will press for a world ban on landmines, to spare thousands more Tariqs across the globe. PHOTOGRAPH: JENNY MATTHEWS

Gadafy of the Green Book shares thoughts

Kathy Evans in Tripoli

THE CIA killed Ron Brown, black and native Americans will carve out their own states and President Clinton may face the same fate as John F. Kennedy. At least, so said Colonel Muammar Gadafy, as he treated the international press to a

two-hour monologue on world events.

Now aged 55, his face lined, his hair thinning and streaked with grey, the Libyan leader looked trim and well, despite rumours to the contrary.

The man the West loves to hate responded in kind yesterday, warning that Libya would stop doing business with companies based in the West. Western companies would miss out on plans to buy a fleet of civil aircraft and build a 600-mile railway.

"We will buy them from India, China, Russia and Japan because every time there is a political dispute with the Western countries, their companies stop sending spare parts," he said.

He lambasted those who attended the so-called summit of the peacemakers in Egypt for paving the way for Israel's attacks on Lebanon. "All those who attended the Sharm al-Sheikh summit are responsible for killing the children of Beirut today," he said.

United States intelligence, he said, had killed the late US commerce secre-

tary, Ron Brown, in Croatia. "They killed him because he was black and because he was against the sanctions in Libya. They sabotaged his plane."

African-Americans are a subject close to Col Gadafy's heart since the recent visit of the Nation of Islam leader, Louis Farrak-

worried that Mr Clinton, being a "man of peace", would fall victim to the same kind of plots that killed President Kennedy.

The future of the Jews, too, was a worry. "They are told that Israel is the promised land. It is not, it is the land of death. It is a world conspiracy against the Jews to get them to go and die in Israel," he said.

The colonel spoke amid the debris and twisted metal of his ruined former home in the Assiutya barracks, bombed by the US 10 years ago this week.

Washington threatens to hit Libya again, this time to knock out a plant it says is being developed as the world's largest chemical weapons factory. Col Gadafy exploded, with maps, that the Tabouza plant, 35 miles south of Tripoli, was merely part of the Great Man-Made River Project.

The project will bring the waters of the desert to the coastal cities. The world's largest construction project is due to be finished next September, to coincide with the 27th anniversary of the Libyan revolution.

I asked the Libyan leader if he was tired of being at the top, and considering retirement. He said obviously I did not understand the Libyan revolution, that he had given up running the country in 1977, and it was now run by the people's congresses and the masses. "Read my Green Book," he advised.

Concluding his monologue, he said only in Libya could you hear the truth. It did not bother him that many in the West considered him irrational. "Innocent and good people all over the world know me and love me," he said.

"The CIA killed Ron Brown because he was black and he was against the sanctions in Libya"

han. The colonel said black Americans were thinking of establishing an independent state in the US, while black soldiers withdrawing from the "racist army" could form the biggest black army on earth. The recent Million Man March in Washington marked the beginning of independent states, not only for African-Americans, but for Amerindians and other minorities. The Libyan leader was

News in brief

Man killed at asylum camp

A 28-year-old Turkish man was stabbed to death and seven others seriously injured in a brawl at a registration camp for asylum seekers in south-west Germany.

About 60 people armed with clubs, pipes, iron rods and knives were involved in the incident on Tuesday night at the camp in Ingelheim, near Mainz.

Tension between Turks and ethnic Albanians from Serbia had been reported at the camp and police were called on Monday to break up a fight between the two groups. — AP.

Bikers bombed

Attackers, believed to have been Bandidos motorcycle gangsters, fired anti-tank missiles which badly damaged the clubhouse of rival Hell's Angels in Copenhagen yesterday. The raid is expected to intensify the bikers' turf war, Danish police said. No one was injured. — Reuter.

Border clash

Eritrean troops pushed about four miles into Djibouti and clashed with government troops late on Tuesday in a border dispute, diplomats said yesterday. Up to 600 Djiboutian troops and tanks were sent to reinforce the border. — Reuter.

Cats 'cull'd'

Local authorities in Istanbul are poisoning thousands of cats, dogs and seagulls to clean up the streets before a UN conference on human settlements there in June, animal rights activists claimed yesterday. Health officials denied the charge. — Reuter.

Virus prompts ban

The Philippines yesterday banned the export of live monkeys after an Ebola-like virus killed two Philippine monkeys in a breeding facility in the United States. It will remain in force while a task force conducts tests at breeding farms. — Reuter.

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You can tell it's a bandwagon because publishers make the books all look the same. The cover has either a naked ultra-muscular man or some gay James Dean lookalike.

Ros Coward page 9

URGENT APPEAL

CRISIS IN LEBANON

As you read this, an emergency is unfolding in Lebanon. 400,000 men, women and children have abandoned their homes to escape the recent outbreak of fighting.

The refugees are fleeing north. Many are too exhausted to carry on and are seeking shelter in schools, hospitals and factories. More refugees are expected to join them.

The Red Cross is already on the spot, giving mattresses, blankets and vital food aid to people who have left everything behind. We are the only international aid agency providing assistance throughout southern Lebanon, by distributing supplies to medical centres and clinics, and we are deploying 32 ambulances and 25 mobile Red Cross clinics to the areas of greatest need.

Now we need your help to ensure aid continues to reach those who need it desperately. Please give as much as you can today. Your donation can save lives. Thank you.

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صكتا من الاعمال

Berlusconi promises slash public spending

Plumber's st...

The new Audi

The television mogul's exclusive revelation to John Hooper in Milan could ignite a row before Sunday's closely-fought polls

Berlusconi promises to slash public spending

SILVIO BERLUSCONI, the leader of the Italian right, has vowed to slash public spending if he is returned to power in Sunday's general election. In an exclusive interview with the Guardian, he declared: "We shall make our top priority a severe programme of cuts in every one of the many items which make up the budget."

The millionaire politician's uncompromising pledge, which goes far beyond anything he has said in the Italian media, looks set to ignite a furious row in the final 48 hours of a neck-and-neck race for power with the centre-left Olive Tree bloc led by Romano Prodi.

I put it to the media magnate that his warning of strong, unpalatable medicine 'An austerity policy is an absolute necessity; I went into government in pursuit of one'

was a fair cry from the rhetoric of two years ago, when he swept into government on the promise of a "new Italian miracle".

"I disagree with you," he said. "The interpretation of our pledge then was different; what we are saying now we said two years ago. An austerity policy is an absolute necessity for our country and I went into government in pursuit of one. There is no [other] possibility — and not just because we are held to an austerity policy out of respect for the Maastricht criteria [the entry to European monetary union], but because our country has inherited a situation that does not allow of any other policy."

We were standing in one of Mr Berlusconi's own television studios in Milan, into his latest gliding, quavering drawl on the campaign trail. He had swept up to the

doors of the studios on the outskirts of Milan in a seven-car cavalcade. As his bodyguards battled to block the way to local cameramen and reporters, we tore along corridors, up stairs, down ramps and through passageways to the dressing room allocated to Mr Berlusconi for one of the longest and most important interviews of this campaign.

A large part of his success — both as businessman and politician — can be put down to his knack of appearing hugely amused by whatever he is doing. In the bare, neon-lit corridor, he seemed scarcely able to contain his mirth as he asked the presenter whether he had time for a shower.

It was agreed he did, and within a few minutes those of us outside — carabinieri, bodyguards, Mr Berlusconi's "image adviser" Mitty Simonetto, and a constellation of stars from his television channels waiting to pay their respects — were engulfed by the aroma of strongly scented toiletries.

Someone had to take him a message, and for a few seconds we were treated to the sight of Italy's former prime minister grinning as he tried to force his shirt into his trousers. Some minutes later, there was a call for "Francesca" and the tycoon's personal make-up artist slipped through the door with Ms Simonetto.

During the commercial breaks in the interview which followed, Ms Simonetto leant over him like a second talking to a boss. Not that Mr Berlusconi's answers ran for almost four minutes.

The media mogul needs all the help he can get in this campaign. His aim, he told us, was a "liberal revolution" aimed at creating a state at the service of the citizen, rather than one that is master of the citizen's destiny. He is proposing, among other things, a "ticket" system for hospitals, and parent choice in education.

For that, he needs an outright majority in at least one house of parliament. At the last election, his alliance won more than half the seats in the chamber of deputies, but more than a third of them were taken by the Northern League, which has since deserted him.

To secure a straight majority this time, his party and its remaining allies — most of them former neo-fascists — need to boost their tally in the lower house by more than 25 per cent. Mr Berlusconi argued that an absolute majority was also required for the



Right turn... Mr Berlusconi needs a parliamentary majority to effect a 'liberal revolution' PHOTOGRAPH: STEFANO MONTESI

of what remains of the old regime. But it is not certain that Mr Berlusconi's alliance offers any greater guarantees. He has yet to state unequivocally that he will be prime minister if his side wins.

In this interview, he said he would "keep faith with the commitment I have made to the voters, if that is what they want". One possible reason for this coyness is that Mr Berlusconi is on trial for bribery, though the hearing has been suspended for the duration of the campaign.

I asked him whether, if he were found guilty, Italy could have a convicted prime minister. He did not give a direct reply. "Certain executives of a company which belongs to the group I created are said to have corrupted officers of the revenue guard many years ago. I am not accused of doing that, but of being unable not to have known about corruption that was, in reality, extortion," he said.

Mr Berlusconi added that "the behaviour of certain prosecutors" could provoke a crisis in relations between the various state branches "capable of changing democratic life" in Italy. "The Italian people have understood this very well, and the results on April 21 will confirm it."

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World news in brief

Police 'undermine truth commission'

FOUR of South Africa's former police chiefs warned yesterday of further legal action in defence of the "fundamental rights" of security force members accused of apartheid-era atrocities before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The threat came after the commission had given an undertaking to two former security-branch officers that evidence implicating them in atrocities would be held over, pending a supreme court action next week.

Chechens kill 26 Russians

CHECHEN rebels have ambushed a Russian convoy, killing 26 servicemen and wounding 51, Interfax news agency said yesterday. A Russian military spokesman told Interfax that the rebels attacked the convoy of 27 tanks, armoured vehicles and cars with grenade launchers and rockets near Shatal, about 80 miles south of the capital, Grozny.

Berlin ceremony defended

GERMANY'S National Olympic Committee has been accused of tastelessness after a re-enactment in Berlin of the torch-lighting ceremony of Hitler's 1936 Olympic Games. At an event marking the centenary of the modern games on Monday, the Olympic flame was lit by Fritz Schilgen, the man who performed the ritual under Hitler's approving gaze 60 years ago.

Greek gift to road safety

AS CARS poured into Athens yesterday at the end of the five-day Orthodox Easter break, officials were left counting a record death toll — 37 people killed and more than 400 badly injured in 280 accidents.

Liberian warlords' stalemate

Abacha's being cited as the single biggest cause of the carnage. In recent years, beer consumption has increased by 700 per cent and the per capita intake of whisky — Greece's favourite spirit — is by far the highest in the West. Elsewhere in Europe traffic accidents are on the decline, but here they are on the rise because Greeks still insist on drinking when they drive, said Professor Yiannis Papadopoulos, who heads the Greek Movement for Road Safety. — Helena Smith, Athens.



GENERAL Roosevelt Johnson, the Liberian faction leader (centre), speaks out on the situation in Monrovia yesterday from a house near the besieged Barclay's Training Centre barracks where his supporters are holed up. He said the attempt to arrest him 11 days ago, which ignited violence, was an unlawful plot to drive him out of the race for power.

Artful dodgers hone their art

MUGGERS attending their first conference in Bangladesh have decided to double their efforts at busy road junctions in the capital Dhaka, newspapers reported yesterday.

'Plumber' strives to plug Russia's nuclear leaks

The threat is not from foreign spies but badly paid workers who may steal to sell to terrorists, writes David Hearst in Moscow

IF RUSSIA'S nuclear industry can be likened to a huge, rusting super-tanker, still functioning but badly in need of repair, it is Yuri Volodin's job to design a system to plug the leaks.

He heads the directorate of control and protection of nuclear and radioactive materials in the Russian nuclear inspectorate, Gosatomnadzor. He is a young man who unambiguously rejects the old doctrine that the sole threat to Russia's nuclear stocks is external and foreign.

The main concern had previously been to provide a "regime of secrecy, personnel selection and defence against external threat", Mr Volodin said.

Experience of nuclear theft in Russia speaks otherwise. In the past two years there have been 28 incidents of nuclear theft, all carried out by Russians working in the industry. With the exception of two cases in Murmansk in July and November 1993, where material was taken from the nuclear fuel assemblies of warships, none involved highly enriched uranium (HEU) or plutonium.

any criminal group which has managed to establish a chain, involving theft, intermediaries, storage of stolen nuclear materials and their purchase by a customer. All of the 23 episodes were intercepted at the first stage.

The exact amount of HEU or plutonium held is a state secret. Informed guesses suggest that, by the end of the century, there will be about 90 tons of weapons-grade plutonium and 700 tons of

weapons-grade uranium — the largest stocks in the world. The United States, by comparison, has 50 tons of plutonium and 200 tons of uranium.

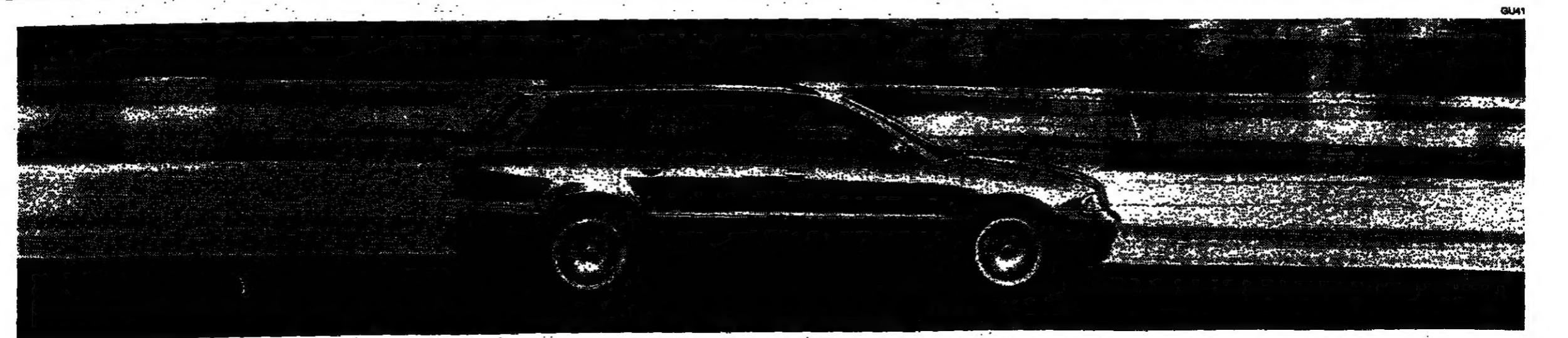
Mr Volodin believes he has won the domestic battle to change hearts and minds. "In the past two years, all the ideology of security was radically reconsidered, and if it was difficult before to convince Minatom [the ministry of atomic energy] of the need for radical improvements in the protection system, now everyone understands this need. The problem is the means. The state does not have enough money."

"Not even all the producers of nuclear fuel in Russia are equipped with portals [body scanners] capable of detecting nuclear material," Mr Volodin said.

The ministry pointed out that nuclear arms were in

any case overseen by a government commission headed by the prime minister.

But Nikolai Filonov, former chief of a military nuclear unit, wrote in Nezavisimaya Gazeta: "There are grounds for alarm... The technical means of protecting nuclear objects are obsolete, and there is no possibility of reaching agreements with industry to get equipment."



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Cooking up a mini boom
But will pre-electoral bombardment win votes?

TODAY'S NEWS that Labour's lead over the Conservatives has gone up seven points to 21 on the Guardian/ICM adjusted poll suggests that only one thing will save the Conservatives from electoral oblivion: an economic miracle. There is nothing in yesterday's crop of indicators to suggest even remotely that anything like that will happen but, equally surely, economic growth and living standards will probably be much stronger than people realise between now and May 1997 when an election has to be held. The number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell 25,700 in March to 2,187 million after the surprise rise of 5,500 the previous month. This means that claimant unemployment as a proportion of the workforce dropped from 7.9 per cent to 7.8 per cent (an average consisting of 10.5 per cent male unemployment and 4.3 per cent female). Although the Government's figures only count those claiming benefit, the unemployment rate is similar to the 8.2 per cent recorded by the independent Labour Force Survey for the year to February. The LFS survey also shows that over the same period employment rose by 306,000. This ought to be good for the "feel-good factor" except that 217,000 of the new jobs were part-time.

supposed to predict turning points in the economy 12 to 18 months in advance. This index suddenly stopped falling in January (after over 18 months of decline) and started rising in February. Yesterday's figures show that average earnings have crept up from 3.25 to 3.5 per cent in the year to February. This is more than the 3 per cent needed to absorb increases in inflation and taxation and provides further evidence of rising real incomes in the run-up to the election. But we haven't seen anything yet. The feelgood factor will be heavily massaged this month by the paying out of the £4.1 billion tax reductions announced in the budget and by over £1 billion in electricity rebates. These will be joined by extra spending power from £15 billion worth of maturing Tassas (tax-free saving) followed by an aerial bombardment of windfall capital gains from building society takeovers (of which the Halifax alone may be worth £10 billion) and the start of the £3 billion-a-year construction programme generated by lottery projects. And all this is against the descent of falling interest rates (which take up to a year to affect the economy) and a possible resurgence of world growth.

Statistics that are hard to beat
Instead of resisting change, police should take the lead

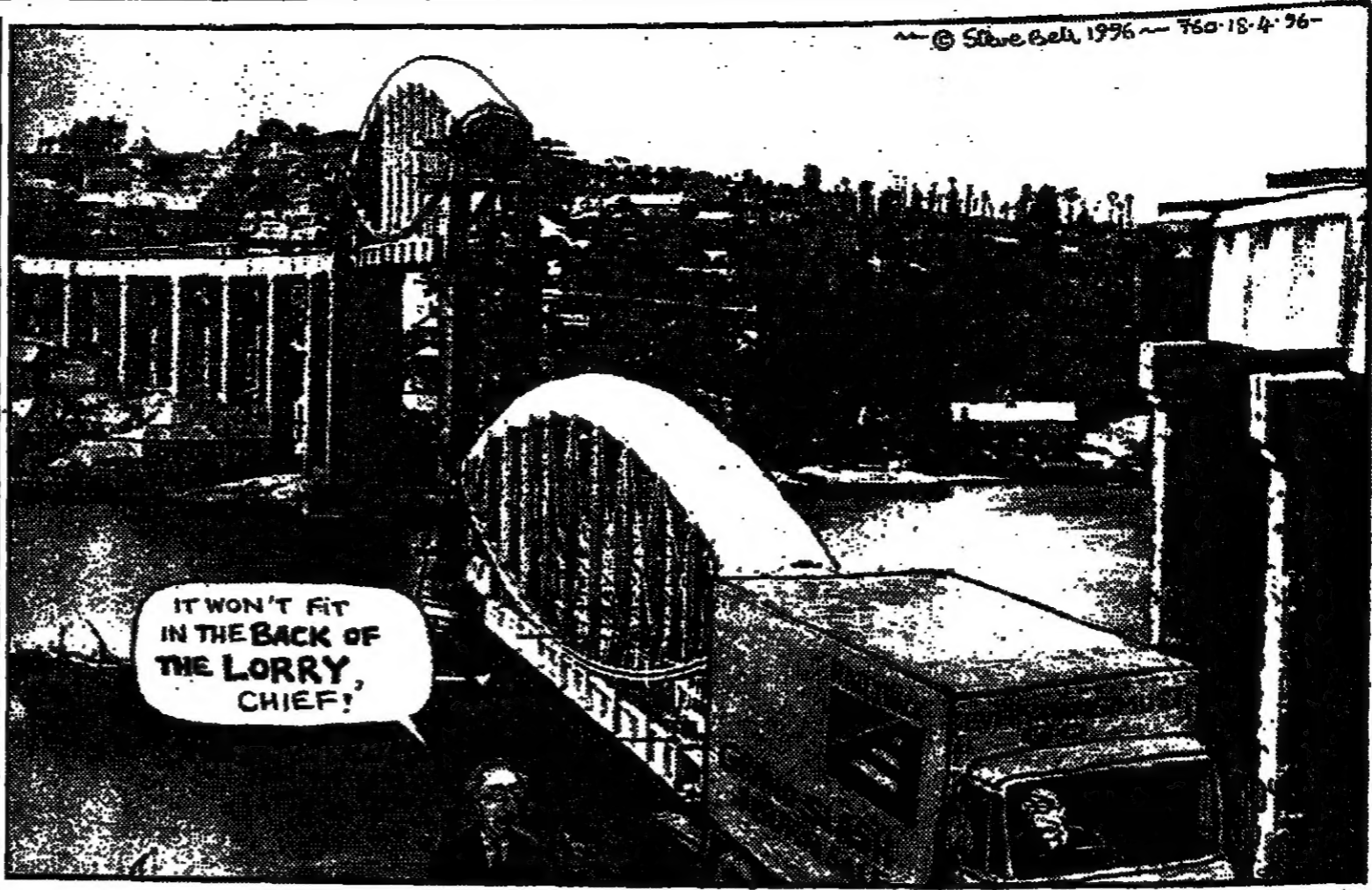
DOES extra funding produce better policing? No service has had bigger increases than the police yet crime has doubled since 1978. Even a primary school pupil should spot the fallacy in such an answer. Rising crime has multiple causes of which police ineffectiveness remains one of the smallest. Even so, the Audit Commission is right to pursue its scrutiny of police effectiveness. Six billion pounds is spent annually on the police yet the service remains the least accountable and the most secretive in terms of its priorities, policies, and record. Yesterday's second round of annual police performance indicators from the Audit Commission helps fill this information gap.

Commission's monitoring exercise is absolutely crucial. It now has wide experience with other services and has begun its police operation in a sensible way with plenty of caveats and warnings. There was one further police objection: a complaint that last year's exercise was "rewarded with minimal public interest". That is easily solved. The home secretary should insist that every force holds a press conference at which all the Commission's league tables are made available plus the Chief Constable to explain the local force's position.

The silence of the songbirds
Progress in farming methods has taken a heavy toll on birds

HARK, HARK, the lark at heaven's gate sings, but these days it's getting harder to hear one. Yesterday's warning from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and seven other leading conservation bodies is a real song-stopper. A previous survey, from the late 1980s, showed just eight species in the highest category of concern (where there has been a 50 per cent reduction in breeding population or range over the past 25 years). Now there are 23, including for the first time farmland birds such as the turtle dove, tree sparrow, bullfinch, reed bunting, song thrush — and the famous skylark.

find the fat juicy insects which they need. Seed-seeking species such as the buntings and finches suffer. Rotational cereal planting, with stubble fields ploughed up instead of being left through the winter, creates a sterile environment. So does the continuing shrinkage of hedgerows which deprives the linnet and other species of safe nesting sites. Villages and town suburbs are becoming zones of refuge for birds driven off the hostile land.



Letters to the Editor
A poverty of imagination

PETER LILLEY'S response to the increase in poverty in Britain is to state that access to washing machines, cars and central heating has increased among those in the bottom 20 per cent of the income distribution (Poverty, what poverty?, April 17). This tells us nothing about the quality of those goods or the reasons why people may need them. The car, for instance, is more likely to be a 20-year-old Cortina — needed for the security guard's job on 23 per hour, where you must provide your own transport and dog — than a four-wheel-drive turbo. The washing machine is unlikely to be a 2400 Zanussi; more likely a second-hand machine needed because the local laundrette has closed due to vandalism, and you have three young children to bring up. As for the central heating, this is likely to be a blessing in disguise, particularly if you live in a system-built flat with poor insulation.

Conservative administrations have done this since 1978. The last thing most people want is to be dependent on poverty-level benefits. Only ministers who know nothing of the indignity, humiliation and hardship of living on benefits would stereotype people forced to be reliant on them as willing victims. But it's equally apparent that people do not want to be forced into dependence on the low-wage jobs which this government seems to see as the basis of Britain's economic future. Instead they want training, education, affordable childcare and the prospect of worthwhile employment.

Not does Mr Lilley's narrow consumerist approach to poverty tell us anything about the quality of the living environment, the opportunities for employment or personal development and the degree to which people feel any sense of control over their lives. One only has to go around the former mining communities, outlying estates or inner-city areas to realise that poverty and deprivation exist to a degree that is unacceptable in an advanced industrial society like Britain.

IF Britain has a "social protection system to prevent poverty", why then were there 125,000 homeless families in England last year? And why are 45,000 single people sleeping rough or living in temporary accommodation in London? What more evidence of poverty does Peter Lilley need? Teenagers are begging in shop doorways for a living, families are living in one room in a bed-and-breakfast hotel, unemployed couples are facing homelessness as mortgage arrears mount.

Walk, man

JON Harley wants separate train carriages for mobile-phone users and under-fives (Letters, April 17). How about Walkman-users like himself? On the other hand, we could all just learn to live together.



Come on you (greyish) reds

OF course Manchester United's grey shirts were a mistake (United decide on no more grey days, April 16). Grey is the colour of depression, submission, defeat and halfheartedness. What we wear colours our mood, our health, our performance. It's not so much "getting out on the wrong side of the bed" that ruins the day, but grabbing a jersey of the wrong colour. It's got nothing to do with fashion, skin tones, hair or eyes. It's simple psychology.

analysed the football results for the last 75 years, and discovered that teams with red shirts, socks, shorts — particularly bold clean areas of red — had consistently outstripped their rivals in blue, green or yellow battle-dress.

On the need to give birth to a new vision of parenting

CO-OPERATION is clearly essential to dual parenting (Good riddance to the patriarch, April 15; Letters April 16, 17), but this has to be built on a foundation of deep communication. This is what women most often feel they lack from their male partners.

my partner to do more. His eventual response was that the stress of juggling work and home was what "we feminists" wanted: it was my problem, not his. Reader, I left and became a single parent. I am still juggling work and home. I would prefer our son to grow up with both parents, but if he did so, his most visible role model would be a father who is unrepentant about his non-involvement with home and children. What kind of father would our son then become?

THREE cheers for Russell Celyn Jones (Letters, April 17) and his commitment to men's involvement in childcare. My partner and I both work full-time, and we have a son. Ben Campbell's statistics are spot-on: I did much of the housework and virtually all of the loving care of our son.

A FEMINIST is not a mono-alibic siren. Feminists the world over have initiated, inspired and encouraged debates around masculinity and domesticity, including parenting. What the complicated responses to fathers and fathering embrace different intellectual and emotional realities if you care to be made aware of them, which Ros Coward clearly has not.

Schizoid approach to insanity

FULLY support Meg Henderson (Madness of the normal variant, April 16). It is one of this government's most criminal acts that it has made a complete shambles of "care in the community". It rushed to close the mental hospitals, not as a humane act to prevent psychiatric abuse, but for economic expediency. In doing so it saved a vast amount of money, but it has been spent on facilities to care for the mentally ill in society. Alas, this money was withheld from local authorities, which could have built secure accommodation more fitting to the care of those poor individuals who could not cope with life outside an institution.

to help less severe cases to be released into the community. (Dr) Stephen F Myler, 12 Ox Box 494, Leicester LE5 5ZW. MEG Henderson's attack on alternative approaches to "madness" is the kind of nonsense that gives meek to drug companies which market psychiatric medication, and causes misery to people looking for asylum at times of distress.

A Country Diary

THE BURREN, Ireland: At 6.40am I watched a cat saunter down our drive. She stopped at each lavender bush to sniff, raising her head as if in ecstasy. I immediately thought of our own Puss Cat (She died in my arms in January '95, aged 17. We had the vet come to the house). I took her and our miniature, wire-haired dachshund for a walk in the Duchy of Cornwall woods near Looe. The dog rushed ahead, her nose to the ground, the cat ambled, stopping every now and then sniffing delicately at the woodland flowers. Many was the fright she gave me, that same cat in her mainly rural depreations. One summer morning she appeared at our screen-door in Ithaca, upstate New York. I screamed because there was Puss Cat looking like Fu Manchu, with a serpent trailing moustache-like from each side of her mouth. My scream scared the Cat, who dropped the snake

which, with forked tongue flicking in and out of his mouth, rapidly slithered away. I grabbed Puss Cat and then stood transfixed, no longer with fright but with awe. So, like Lawrence, I was "honoured": "How glad I was he had come" a captive, but gladder that he went away free. Once our dog was being starved on our vet's orders (she'd eaten pills for human consumption — the Poison Unit in the hospital had to be phoned for an antidote, hence the starvation). We noticed Puss Cat in the distance walking on the walls, holding something in her mouth. She jumped into the garden, came over to the dog and paced down in front of her old chicken carcass. There was between them a silent communication, independent of the human world. Their reaction to the Burren after their awful six months of quarantine was joy unconfined.

A natural selection from the Darwin postbag

EVOLUTIONARY principles are not contradicted by the success of social animals, says Alan Grant (Letters, April 15). The social bonds and co-operative behaviour displayed by these animals gives them an evolutionary advantage, making those individuals displaying higher degrees of social behaviour indeed the "fittest" and "strongest" in their environment.

the fittest, the ones that tend to survive and reproduce, are those that are best adapted to survive in the environment in which they exist; strength doesn't necessarily have anything to do with it. If a creature's survival is aided by forming mutually supportive bonds within a social structure, then those who are most able to form such bonds will probably be the most successful, the ones best fitted for reproduction.

ation controversy" but to some of us there is no dichotomy between creation and evolution. The Prime Mover of the whole shoot (or "God" as scientists now seem to call it/uhm for short) could have created an evolutionary universe. Barbara Wall, Hayricks, Rackham, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2EU.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

صوتنا من الاهل

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

Five-year low in claimant count ● Shephard praises growth ● Meacher slams vast waste of talent

Part-timers cut jobless total

Notebook

Governor has Clarke in sights

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

BRITAIN'S jobless total fell to its lowest for almost five years yesterday...

rate monthly claimant count — joblessness measured by the number of people out of work and claiming benefit...

there were now 1.4 million people who had been forced into part-time or temporary work...

lustre state. Far too many people are stuck in low-skilled, low-paid, insecure jobs...

count contained five weeks rather than four. Statisticians believe the underlying trend is for a monthly fall in unemployment...

that employment rose by 118,000 to 25,680,000 in the three months ending in February...



Edited by Patrick Donovan

REPORTS of the death of inflation are as premature as those of the demise of Mark Twain, the Governor of the Bank of England quipped last night.

over 65s, that the proportion of retired people to wage earners is rapidly projected to double to 50 per cent over the next couple of decades.

By 2050, the population imbalance will have grown so acute that in the worst affected countries such as Germany and Japan, the financial burden of every older person will have to be borne by just two working people.

A bitter blow for sweets workers

Financial Staff

AROUND 300 staff, virtually the entire workforce, last night lost their jobs at Meitls, the firm best-known for making the New Perry Fruits which used to be a favourite present for elderly aunts.



Melting away... Around 300 workers have lost their jobs at the Meitls factory in Bedford after the company called in receivers

Signet's big profit rise comes with debt warning

Lisa Buckingham

SIGNET, the former Ratners jewellery business, yesterday unveiled a 74 per cent growth in profits but gave its hard-pressed investors little encouragement that a potential \$300 million windfall from the sale of its UK chains, H Samuel and Ernest Jones, was imminent.

Watchdog warning on pensions

Teresa Hunter

A CITY watchdog yesterday warned of tough new penalties, including heavy fines and even de-recognition, against firms who fail to provide victims of the pension transfer scandal with speedy compensation.

"sufficiently rapid progress" with the pensions review.

This review was ordered back in 1993 by the City's chief watchdog, the Securities and Investments Board, after a report by accountants KPMG Peat Marwick estimated up to 500,000 cases outstanding, in such disparity that they have not been able to provide the FIA with any convincing figures about the numbers of victims already compensated.

1,061,000 cases identified so far. The insurance companies which were alone responsible for 728,000 wrongly sold policies, have only paid compensation to 1,000 priority cases.

The position of the large bancassurance, with 163,000 cases outstanding, is in such disarray that they have not been able to provide the FIA with any convincing figures about the numbers of victims already compensated.

have failed to pay out a penny to date, and large FIA groups with a potential 72,000 cases have parted with just \$8,000.

PIA chairman Joe Palmer said: "It is clear that progress is not as good in some cases as it should be. PIA will not allow the situation to drift. Those who are not rolling up their sleeves will be disciplined and the penalties will match their failure."

Sun Alliance chief's pay package given a 35pc boost

Lisa Buckingham

ROGER TAYLOR, the group chief executive of insurance group Sun Alliance, saw his remuneration package rise by nearly 35 per cent to \$375,121 last year, according to the company's annual report.

News in brief

BT claims fall to convince

Domestic phone users could face higher charges if Ofcom scraps some price restrictions on British Telecom services...

Energy demand

THE National Audit Office is being urged by Friends of the Earth and a coalition of local authorities to investigate this summer's £2.5 billion nuclear privatisation after Mike Sadiqi, an independent expert on nuclear-power economics, said that the industry should pay some £208 million a year towards a £14.6 billion bill to decommission reactors.

Bio-tech buy-up

Swiss pharmaceutical group Sanofi is acquiring Imutran, a privately-owned Cambridge-based biotechnology company specialising in developing an-

Sacked Robinson could be elected to Woolwich board

Teresa Hunter

WOOLWICH Building Society members may be excused for feeling confused as well as angry at today's annual general meeting when they will be asked to vote sacking chief executive Peter Robinson on to the board.

are also retiring the meeting, at which the society's governing body will be reduced to 13 members, will undoubtedly be stormy.

High Court rejects Lloyd's attempt to stall hearing

Pauline Springett

LOYD'S of London suffered a humiliating Court defeat yesterday in its attempt to get an adjournment of a hearing to decide whether it can seize compensation awards to Names over their losses.

Walker, Feltrim and Merritt claim other names groups opposed the adjournment after it emerged that the three groups had struck a secret deal with the Lloyd's chairman, David Rowland.

Sparks flying

TRADE Secretary Ian Lang risks a very nasty shock from the latest mega-bid prospect to short-circuit the privatised electricity market.

Worker's burden

IT TAKES five wage earners to support every one retired person now working in the average industrialised country.

Tourist rates - Bank Belle

Table with 4 columns: Country, Exchange Rate, and other financial data.

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian Rupee and Israeli Shekel)

Sarah Ryle in Washington reports on the latest World Economic Outlook

Smiths scrambles to cockpit winner

The IMF expects....

Table with columns for Output Real GDP growth, Inflation, and Unemployment rate for 1995, 1996, and 1997. Includes sub-sections for World, Industrialised countries, Total G7, Developing countries, Economies in transition, and UK.



This way... Premier Ryutaro Hashimoto escorts President Clinton who told their Tokyo news conference yesterday that trade relations are 'on the right track'.

IMF calls for painful cuts in public services

The International Monetary Fund last night prescribed fiscal discipline which it insisted must be swallowed by leading economies unless they wanted to see growth slip back from already modest levels.

There would have to be sizeable reforms to public spending schemes, particularly health and pension provision, according to a special report on the effect of ageing populations.

markets (where) levels of structural unemployment, particularly among the unskilled and the young, remain much higher in Europe than in most other industrial countries.

The Underside

Dan Atkinson

BARCLAYS staff will be delighted to learn that help is at hand in their attempt to do the consequences of customers who resort to the bomb rather than the complaints department.

is for a limited period only... presumably until Barclays' spot of bother disappears from the headlines.

German firm denies bribes claim by Chileans

Paul Murphy

THE German conglomerate Metallgesellschaft has dismissed allegations of fraud and bribery, levelled by Chile's state-owned metal producer Codelco.



property tycoon David Rowland, whose Montegasse tax status rates a mention. To these Riviera types, one Rowland is much the same as another.

Advertisement for Admiral Car insurance, featuring the text 'Car insurance over £300?' and 'Call Admiral free on 0800 600 800'.

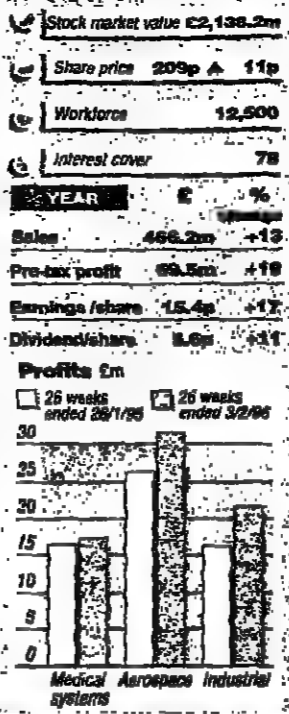
Outlook

Pauline Springett

SMITHS Industries has won a \$100 million contract to supply electronic equipment for a new fighter trainer for the US Air Force and Navy.

sume that this is the nadir and that it will pick up," he said. Sir Roger added that the outlook for US civil aviation products was also looking up.

Smiths Industries



Healthy IBM to lift payout while AT&T sees double

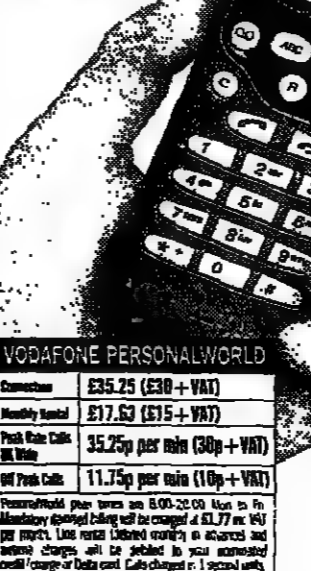
Nicholas Bamister Technology Editor

COMPUTER group International Business Machines underlined its return to health yesterday with the first dividend increase for seven years.

relating to the acquisition of software companies. IBM chairman Louis Gerstner, brought in to rescue the company in 1993 after it plunged to an \$8 billion loss.

New digital Nokia. 100 hours of power!

- NEW GSM MODEL 1610. Up to 100 hrs standby-time. Up to 3.5 hrs talk-time. 45 name/number memory stored on SIM.



Advertisement for Nokia mobile phone, including features like 'FREE 50 MINUTES PER MONTH' and 'LIMITED OFFER £9.99 INC. VAT'.

Advertisement for Cellphones Direct, featuring the text 'ORDER NOW WITH YOUR CREDIT CARD DETAILS FOR FREE DELIVERY IN 4 WORKING DAYS' and 'FREEPHONE 0500 000 888'.

Handwritten Arabic text: 'صكنا من الاجل'

Craver to put on Alha

Lowmarket with

Soccer

Premiership: Nottingham Forest 0, Coventry City 0

Coventry draw little satisfaction

NOBODY went home satisfied. A point is better than nothing...

Forest dominated the first half with an attacking invention that identified their higher pedigree...

Haaland's foul was ended by Williams's foul on the edge of the area. However, Forest could not capitalise on the free-kick...



Lee-way for Newcastle... the midfielder squeezes his shot between Benall and Charlton for the only goal last night

Sheffield Wed 0 Chelsea 0 Pleat plays safe

SHEFFIELD Wednesday's tortuous climb towards Premiership safety continues. Another scrambled point another step up the ladder...

Impatience is the prerogative of all long-suffering supporters and in South Yorkshire, where expectation tends to eclipse common sense, goodwill has been in short supply recently...

Chelsea often look a better team than they are. They flatter to deceive in the nicest possible way...

Aston Villa 1, West Ham United 1

Alert Cottee snatches late point for West Ham

TONY COTTEE's late equaliser for West Ham ruined the evening for Aston Villa...

Villa's reply was instant. Yorke left Rieper on his backside before crossing to the far post...

Charles, who left the field surrounded by paramedics who appeared to be tending his left leg...

Scotland lose Ferguson for Euro '96

Scotland's hopes of playing for next Wednesday's warm-up match against Denmark in Copenhagen...

After last night's exertions he could hardly walk this morning...

Manchester City's chairman Francis Lee has reassured his club's fans that George Kinkaid will not be sold even if Alan Ball's team are relegated...

Even so, much of the football was still unappealingly dull but at least there was a hint of a competitive edge...

Advertisement for Sky Sports featuring a large image of a soccer player and text: 'but which one? Watch the thrilling climax to the hottest title race ever - exclusively live... the best ever satellite offer from GRANADA... £29.99... 0800 28 11 89'

Results

Table of sports results including Soccer, Baseball, Basketball, Cricket, Hockey, Ice Hockey, Badminton, and Tennis.

LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Premier Division Dundalk v St. Patrick's Athletic (7-6).

London Rugby League: London Broncos v London Wasps.

Various small text fragments and advertisements on the right edge of the page.

Why 10 horses died, page 13

Soccer's relegation dog-fights, page 14

The other Twickenham speaks, page 15

Botham senses failure, page 15

SportsGuardian

PREMIERSHIP SOCCER

Manchester United 1, Leeds United 0

Keane restores the red

David Lacey

ROY KEANE finally restored the colour to Manchester United's cheeks at Old Trafford last night after the Premier League leaders had produced football as grey as the shirts they have just discarded. For nearly an hour Leeds United, who had seen their goalkeeper Mark Beeney sent off in the 16th minute after he had handed outside the penalty area, were the better side. But in the 72nd minute Keane gathered a deflected shot from Scholes and carefully made a shooting angle before driving the ball past Radebe, who had proved a more than adequate replacement in the Leeds goal.

Having suffered, at Southampton, their first defeat in 19 matches, Manchester United were in need of a restorative. Leeds, beaten in nine of their previous 12 Premiership fixtures, appeared

the ideal opponents to help supply it. Howard Wilkinson, already without Yaboah and Pemberton because of injuries, replaced Lukic in goal with Beeney and recalled Beesley and Worthington to his crumbling defence. Pallister was back alongside Bruce for Manchester United, making only his sixth appearance in 27 matches because of sciatica.

Within 15 seconds the Leeds defence nearly suffered a collective slipped disc. Keane burst through their cover on the right before setting up a chance for Cantona, who was denied a goal only by Beeney's alertness in blocking the close-range shot.

So perhaps Leeds were not there merely for the taking. In fact they all but took the lead in the seventh minute. Palmer's raking pass out to Gray led to a corner on the right and, from Worthington's cross, Deane saw a glancing header cleared off the line by Pallister.

With the combination of McAllister's stealth and Palmer's urgency challenging a Manchester United midfield lacking the suspended Butt, there was a buoyancy about Leeds which belied their recent form. And still Beeney refused Old Trafford the relief of an early lead, diving hard to his left in the 12th minute to push wide Keane's firmly driven shot.

That turned out to be Beeney's last significant contribution to the proceedings. Four minutes later he came out to meet a long ball from Bruce as Cole closed in, handled a yard outside the penalty area and was sent off by Keith Cooper. Leeds had no goalkeeper on the bench but Radebe had kept a clean sheet against Middlesbrough just over a fortnight earlier, after replacing a concussed Lukic at half-time, and he now resumed the task. Ford went off to make way for him but losing an outfield player did not immediately alter the game's pattern.

Still Leeds attacked on a broad confident front, with Gray turning past May and Pallister before drawing a full-length save from Schmeichel. May had replaced Bruce, who has been troubled by a hamstring injury, shortly after Beeney's dismissal.

Now Cole began to get on Old Trafford's nerves. Three times he might have scored before half-time but on each

occasion his control let him down, the last after a 40-yard pass from Neville had left the striker clear and outside.

Yet, when Manchester United did get shots on target, Radebe, a goalkeeper at the start of his football career, again showed he had not lost the knack.

In the meantime, at the other end, Werberall's shot into a ruck of bodies had flown over the crossbar after hitting Deane.

For the second half Ferguson replaced McClair with Scholes to give his side more scoring potential from midfield. But a sense of desperation was creeping into Manchester United's football now, not helped by Cantona scooping his shot over after one from Scholes had been blocked. It was Keane to the rescue.

Manchester United: Schmeichel; Irwin, Bruce, Pallister, F. Neville, Beesley, Keane, McClair, Giggs, Cantona, Cole. Leeds United: Beeney; Kelly, Werberall, Beesley, Worthington, Ford (Reddy), Stronach, Palmer, Nicholson, Speed, Gray, Deane. Referee: H. Cooper (Preston Park).

THE RUN-INS

MANCHESTER UNITED
April 27 Nottm Forest home
May 5 Middlesbrough away

NEWCASTLE
April 27 Leeds away
May 2 Nottm Forest away
May 5 Tottenham home

Newcastle United 1, Southampton 0

Lee keeps up the title pressure

Michael Walker

WITH a performance mixing panache and guts, Newcastle maintained their chase of Manchester United by sweeping, and then struggling, the team that had done so much to bring them back into the race. Robert Lee's goal leaves Southampton with plenty to worry about. Kevin Keegan had promised he would hold no grudge against John Berrisford after their public argument on Sunday, but the

manager's forgiveness did not extend to putting the left-back straight back in. He was on the bench, from where he watched his replacement Robbie Elliott.

With Faustino Asprilla and Les Ferdinand overcoming minor injuries, Elliott was Newcastle's only starting change from Sunday's game.

After Southampton's spectacular victory against Manchester United, Dave Merrington understandably fielded the same team. The packed Gallowgate shivered anxiously in the fifth minute when Le Tis-

sier found space 20 yards out, but his shot dribbled wide. And after nine minutes Newcastle's first significant attack eased many nerves.

A mighty leap and flick from Ferdinand took the ball to Asprilla, who quickly found Lee in his new role wide on the right. Lee shaped to cross but then cut inside Charlton and struck the ball low into Beasant's right-hand corner.

It was Lee's first goal since December and he nearly had a second in the 20th minute when he

moved on to Elliott's centre, but this time Beasant saved well.

In a frenetic opening, that attack immediately succeeded a dangerous one from Southampton. Marvellous footwork and a deft pass from Le Tissier released Magilton and Hislop came to meet the Irishman only to stop halfway and turn back. Magilton crossed and Shipperley headed, the ball hit the post, came back off Batty and trundled agonisingly wide for a corner.

Then came a Beasant save from Lee. Yet South-

ampton were far from ruffed and Beasant had a wonderful opportunity to equalise on the half-hour. Monkou's header at a scrambled corner gave Beasant a free volley 10 yards out, but the defender completely miscued.

Worse was to come for Beasant. From Newcastle's next corner, his stomach-high tackle tumbled Lee in the box. Dermot Gallagher awarded the penalty. Although Beardsley's strike was fierce, Beasant guessed right, dived right and parried the ball to safety.

The action was unrelenting. Venison delivered a vicious half-volley after the restart and an unusual mistake by Albert.

Newcastle were still the dominant force but lacked their earlier cohesion. With 20 minutes left Asprilla made way for Clark, with Beardsley moving up alongside Ferdinand. But further inspiration just would not come and the lack of width, caused by Gillespie's absence, continues to be a problem.

Newcastle United: Hislop; Watson, Elliot, Batty, Pascoe, Lee, Ferdinand, Albert, Elliott, Asprilla, Beardsley. Southampton: Beasant; Dodd, Barrell, Magilton, Monkou, Le Tissier, Shipperley, Hearnay, Charlton, Nelson, Vinton. Referee: D. Gallagher (Banbury).

Picture, page 14



Gray trouble again... Giggs encounters further shirt problems against Leeds United at Old Trafford last night. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

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Guardian Crossword No 20,630
Set by Rufus

Across

- Rise and fall of one of the French, recently deceased (8)
- Farewell, thank you for the dance (8)
- Moved camp (8)
- House signs (8)
- Having had a rise, a man goes on holiday (8)
- Rings, and right inside them, gems (8)
- Manage to give a little publicity to the head of department (10)
- A defender who is prepared to shoot, if need be (5,5)
- Relation puts us in the money (8)
- Showed annoyance in grating nutmeg? (8)
- Lorry driver - one in Leeds - breaks down (8)

Down

- Hobbies make time pass (8)
- Dislike writing notes before exam (8)
- Wolf-like descendant? (8)
- Freshly discovered nebula lacking power (8)
- Fed up with tea-break? Just the reverse (8)
- Cupboard key (8)
- Some turned out great (10)
- One is distressed by it (8)
- Travel overseas to get home (8)
- They charge a County Council with devious ruses (8)
- They shelve their responsibilities (10)
- Boulder, when boxed in, took the plunge (8)
- Being saucy I am put outside the room (8)

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سكرا من الامم

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